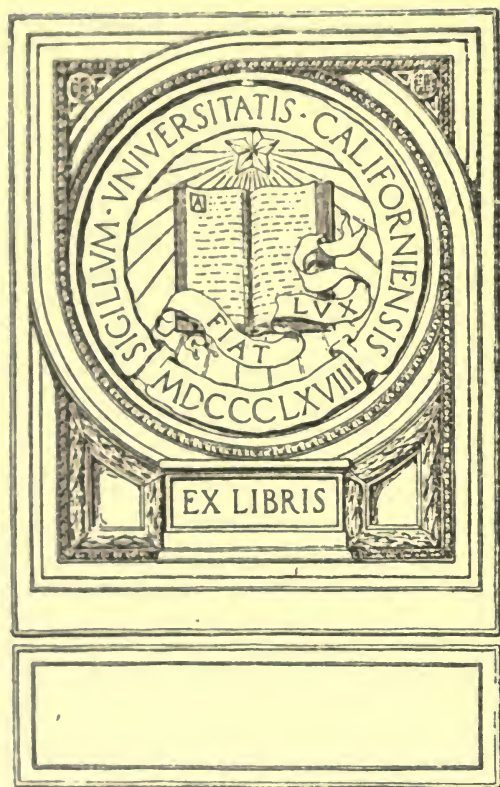


The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a dark blue color with a fine, woven texture. In the center, there is a rectangular label with a decorative border consisting of multiple concentric wavy lines. Inside this border, the text is printed in a serif font, arranged in five lines: 'ADMIRAL', 'SIR WILLIAM', 'ROBERT', 'MENDES', and 'G.C.B.'. A small, light-colored rectangular piece is attached to the left edge of the cover, partially overlapping the central label.

ADMIRAL
SIR WILLIAM
ROBERT
MENDES
G.C.B.







LIFE OF
ADMIRAL SIR W. R. MENDES, G.C.B.
1812-1897



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"Under our lee we could make out a point of rocks, towards which the ship was being slowly but surely set."

See page 22.

From a painting by the late Commander W. W. May, R. N.

LIFE OF
ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM
ROBERT MENDES

G.C.B.

&c. &c. &c.

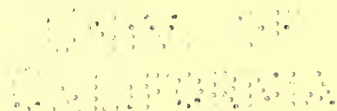
LATE DIRECTOR OF TRANSPORTS

BY HIS SON

BOWEN STILON MENDES

(LATE SURGEON, R.N.)

ILLUSTRATED



LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1899

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PREFACE

IN placing this outline of my father's long career and services before the public, I am carrying out a duty which he wished me to undertake. That he would have done it far better himself goes without saying, but he preferred, owing I think in a great measure to the very retiring and modest nature of his disposition, which made him shrink from publishing his own doings and successes, that I should do it for him after his death.

That the work is full of shortcomings I am only too fully aware, notably in the fact that it may be said to throw but little light on his private character and domestic relations. As a matter of fact, however, the reader who reads "between the lines" cannot fail to form a fairly accurate estimate of the stamp of man he was in these respects; especially will this be the case in connection with that part of the book which deals with the Crimean War, where I have taken the thread of the narrative almost entirely from letters which he wrote, at the time, to my mother, for they show how much she entered into his public life, and how much he valued her opinion and judgment. Whatever he turned his hand to he "did it with his might," and whether we find him as midshipman of the *Thetis*' jolly-boat, as first lieutenant, as commander of a crack line-of-battle ship, as

flag-captain in the Black Sea, or as Director of Transports, his whole energy is given up to his work.

As to the Crimean portion of this book, his wish, as expressed to me, was that the story when told should be told fully and truthfully; and that as all the responsible leaders in the great drama had passed away, the time had come when the public should know, with more certainty, what the conditions were which led to the enormous waste, of blood and money, which that mismanaged campaign entailed. If in the following pages aught can be found to hurt the susceptibilities of any, I crave their forgiveness, and ask them to remember that in leaving his letters to be published my father was actuated solely by the wish to influence, if possible, the trend of public opinion with regard to the future, and that no personal considerations whatever had the slightest weight in the matter. Also it must be remembered that an apparently egotistical tone is inseparable from private letters written, as these were, to his *alter ego*; their absolute unity of thought and feeling allowed him to pour into his wife's ear accounts of his doings and criticisms of others which nothing would have induced him to make public during his life.

Of his deep domestic affection, and of his strong religious convictions, those who remember him personally will need no reminder, whilst for the public at large, who will probably be more interested in his public career than in his private character, it will be sufficient to say here that he possessed both in a very remarkable degree.

I think the most salient feature in his character was his

single-minded devotion to duty, and to the good of the service; he looked at all naval questions with an absolute lack of prejudice, and a complete disregard of tradition, when he considered that the tradition in question was wrong; and this often brought about a sharp contrast of opinion between him and other "heads" both in the Admiralty and War Office, where tradition is too apt, perhaps, to be regarded as a "fetish." He was generally right in his opinions, for he was guided by a sound common sense and a very vast experience; moreover, it was given to him, a privilege shared by few, to live long enough to see many of the changes which he had foretold, and many of the ideas which he had adopted himself, in a rudimentary state, become part and parcel of the naval service.

His capacity for organization down to the merest detail was enormous, amounting to a special gift. The complete success of the plans for the embarkation, transport, and disembarkation of the army from Varna to the Crimea illustrates this well, as does also the pitch of perfection to which he brought the Transport Department, which in the Egyptian Campaign of 1882 was the admiration, not only of our own countrymen, but of all our continental neighbours.

Perhaps I may be forgiven for reminding my lay readers here, that I am writing of the Transport Department of the Admiralty, which deals only with the transport of troops, etc., by sea, and is quite separate and distinct from Army or Land Transport, with which my father, naturally, had nothing whatever to do.

As the reader will see, my father wrote much, almost

invariably committing to writing, during his more active career afloat, the important events of the day. For this reason my difficulty has been, not so much a lack of information, except in some few periods where journals, etc., have accidentally been lost or destroyed, as in making a selection from, and condensing, the great mass of facts contained in the papers at my disposal.

In conclusion, I wish to thank all those who have kindly come forward with assistance and information that have aided me so materially in the completion of the work, which, however, I may truly say has been a labour of love; and I shall be more than satisfied if the book, in addition to being a memorial of my father's long career and well-spent life, fulfils his wish, of being some sort of use and interest to those who may be the readers of it.

B. S. MENDES.

HAYLING ISLAND, *January*, 1899.

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LIFE OF ADMIRAL MENDS

CHAPTER I

1812-1826

COMING of a naval stock, and born amidst naval surroundings at a time when the echoes of our great struggle with France for maritime supremacy were still loud, my father, William Robert Mends, very early showed signs of a strong predilection for a sailor's life. Indeed, if heredity had not of itself been sufficient to implant in his breast a passion for the sea, the family traditions could hardly have failed to supply the omission.

His father, Captain, afterwards Admiral William Bowen Mends, was one of a very large family, of whom no fewer than fourteen boys had entered either the naval or military service of the country. The most distinguished of this family was Sir Robert Mends, K.T.G.C.C., a short account of whose brilliant career in the Navy will be found in the Appendix.* In after years Lord Palmerston spoke of the family as "a race of warriors," as indeed he well might, for but few of these fourteen escaped death in one form or another whilst on active service in the old French war. Now, however, the name, once so familiar, is extinct in the Navy List, and but one representative is to be found in the sister service.†

It is probable that the family originally came from Spain, the name having been Mendez, and settled in South Wales. The earliest record in my possession is of David Mends,

* See Appendices I. and II.

† Colonel Horatio Mends, grandson of Sir Robert Mends, at present commanding a battalion of the King's Royal Rifles.

who was the first Esquire of Templeton in Pembrokeshire in 1486, during the reign of Henry VII. After him came a continuous line of squires of Templeton, and it was one of these, James, who, in the reign of Charles I., took a prominent part in the heroic defence of Pembroke Castle against the Parliamentary forces during the Civil War; a defence, the stubbornness of which so enraged the Roundheads, that they hanged him to one of his own trees when the castle fell. From this episode the present family crest—a round tower from the summit of which projects a mailed arm bearing a battle-axe—takes its origin.

My father was born on February 27th, 1812, and was the eldest son; his father, Captain Mends, was then living at Plymouth, but in 1817, having been placed on half-pay, he moved into South Wales to the neighbourhood of Haverfordwest, where, as before mentioned, the family had resided for many generations, and near to which place also his mother's family, the Bowens of Camrhos, lived.

As the family numbered five children at this time, the journey to Haverfordwest from Plymouth was performed by sea, this being a mode of travel, under the circumstances, preferable to the expensive and circuitous land journey by coach. My father thus went his first voyage at the early age of five, and in after life he had a hazy recollection of the joy and pride which this achievement produced in his mind. Between the age of seven and eight years he was sent to Haverfordwest Grammar School, and here, "in spite of the assistant masters," as he often said afterwards, he acquired a little knowledge of the "three R's" and a smattering of Latin grammar. The school was of the roughest, plenty of flogging taking the place of legitimate instruction. He has often described to me a large churchyard in the vicinity where the school fights always took place, any great disparity in the sizes of the combatants being compensated for by making them fight across a grave, which effectually prevented the bigger boy from closing. He hated the life at this school; he was really anxious to learn, as he had already formed the resolve, even at this early age, to become a sailor, and the difficulties placed in the way of his so doing, and the brutality and ignorance of his masters, inspired him with a horror and disgust of it.

THE
VIRGIL
AUGUST 1890



ADMIRAL WILLIAM BOWEN MENDS.

From a portrait by F. Green, Esq.

During spare hours his greatest delight was to get away to the river, and he had many friends on board the stone-barges, where he used to lend a hand in overhauling ropes, furling sails, or sculling a punt between barge and shore. His fondness for these pursuits got him into trouble both at school and with his father, who at this time had destined him for the Church, in which the family had some little interest. He used to tell a story of how on one occasion when he had been severely flogged at school for playing truant, he decided that he could stand it no longer, and so set out for home. Going along the high road, he descried his father in the distance coming towards him, and knowing that he would not have his sympathy, was for a moment at a loss what to do. Fortunately, however, a cart was jogging along in his direction; he had previously been in conversation with the carter, to whom, boy-like, he had confided his troubles, and who readily grasping the situation gave him leave to take refuge in the cart where, lying close, the danger was safely passed. On reaching home he told his tale to his mother, who sympathized with him, and, woman-like, cried over him a good deal, for she knew that his father's serious displeasure would be incurred by his conduct; and, indeed, on his father's return he got a severe horse-whipping which, as may be imagined, did not do much towards reconciling him to his lot. Such, however, were the customs of those days, and I have no doubt that my grandfather, who was a very affectionate man withal, felt that he had but done his duty by his boy. This incident, however, was productive of good, for to his mother he had unbosomed himself of his longing for the sea, and she talked his father over, so that it was eventually decided that he should be sent to the house of his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Dawe, at Plymouth, where he could be placed at a good day-school with the Navy in prospect. With this object in view, his father obtained a passage for him from Milford to Plymouth in the new 46-gun frigate "Nereus," that had been built at Pembroke, and was going round to complete her equipment.

After a day and night on board, a period of intense enjoyment to the embryo sailor, the wind proved baffling, and the passengers, amongst whom were some ladies, were transferred to the "Dove" cutter, which picked up a fine breeze and made a good passage to Plymouth, in the course

of which she put into Falmouth to land one of the fair sex who was so sea-sick that her life was endangered. In this early voyage my father was also sea-sick, a malady from which he did not suffer again, curiously enough, till he had been some time a post-captain.

On arrival at Plymouth he at once joined the family circle at the house of his grandmother, Mrs. Dawe, where were also his aunt, Hannah Dawe—who afterwards married Captain W. Hillyar*—and his favourite sister, Elizabeth. A happier period now came for him than the rough school life of Haverfordwest, and he was wont in after years to attribute his success to these kind relatives, who by their judicious treatment and the lively interest that they evinced in his welfare did much to mould and influence his character. He was at once placed at a day-school, where he met many boys that he liked, and where he acquired classics enough to read a little Virgil, Ovid, and Cæsar's *Commentaries*. Here he remained till the age of eleven, when a nomination to the Naval College at Portsmouth having been obtained for him, he was placed with a mathematical tutor to go through a short course before joining.

It was at this period that his father was appointed to the command of the "Blanche," a frigate of 46 guns, to fit out for the South American station; and when this ship was nearly ready for sea the house of Rothschild applied to Captain Mends to give ship-room to a sum of money for Rio, being the first instalment of the Brazilian loan. Captain Mends, who had been appointed to South America as a reward for meritorious service, because he would there get a freight, applied to the Admiralty for permission to embark the money, but was informed that the services of the ship he commanded were required to convey Admiral Lord Amelius Beauclerc to Lisbon as commander-in-chief, before proceeding, in accordance with the original intention, to South America. The "Sparrowhawk," commanded by Commander R. Dundas, a son of the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Melville), was ordered home from the Mediterranean to convey the freight to Rio, arriving there

* Captain W. Hillyar, a very distinguished officer, had, at the early age of fifteen, been specially promoted by Nelson to the rank of lieutenant for conspicuous gallantry during a boat attack off Genoa. A special order in council was afterwards obtained by his lordship to confirm the promotion.



MRS. DAWE.

From a portrait.

1000 1000
1000 1000

some little time after the "Blanche." Captain Mends thus lost the freight, a serious thing for him, as he had been unfortunate in investing his prize-money and had a large family. My father's next brother, George, sailed as a volunteer in the "Blanche," and the sight of him in his uniform fired the elder brother with a stronger desire than ever to get to sea.

In November, 1824, a terrible gale visited our southern coast and inflicted great loss on the merchant shipping in Plymouth Sound, and so keen was the coming sailor, even at this early age of twelve, about nautical matters, that at six o'clock in the morning, during the height of the hurricane, he was down at the harbour watching the ships which had dragged their anchors, and he afterwards gave a graphic account, in a letter, of the sad scene which daylight revealed. Not less than twenty-six vessels were totally wrecked, with the loss of many lives. One unfortunate ship was nipped between four others and flattened, and one brig of about two hundred tons was thrown over the Barbican pier, and went bows first into the mud, leaving her stern upright in the air, resting on the pier. The sight of all this, however, only increased his desire to know more of shipping and of the sea.

In May, 1825, his father being abroad, he was consigned for some days prior to his examination for admission to the Naval College, Portsmouth, to the care of Captain Francis Austen, an old friend of the family, who lived at Gosport. Being a clever, as well as a kind man, Captain Austen spent the few days in coaching him for the College examination, which, however, in those days was not a very formidable ordeal. Only six or seven lads presented themselves for entry, and, in spite of his anxiety for his own success, he could not help laughing at the struggles of one of them, who, seated on a high stool at his desk, was tearfully trying to write out the Lord's Prayer with one hand, whilst with the other he was nervously pulling up the leg of his trousers till it was well above the knee. This boy failed to pass, but came in at his next trial. My father was successful, and at once joined the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth.

The governor of the College at this time was Captain Loring, and the head-master a Professor Inman. By Captain Austen's good offices the new arrival obtained introductions

to these, as well as to the Admiral, the Hon. Sir George Grey, who was then Commissioner of the Yard, and his family. Lady Grey and her daughters made a great favourite of him during his time at college.

In a letter to his mother written at this period, he speaks with much indignation of the "toadying" that went on, and complains that when his uncle came for a while to Portsmouth and endeavoured to obtain permission for him to go "out of gates" for an hour or two, it was refused, but that "my lord this" or "my lord that" had only to send his butler to obtain a pass for any boy. He worked hard, however, and took the geometry prize in his first term, and in December, 1826, he passed out of the College with seniority of two years' sea-time.

CHAPTER II.

1826-1830

ON leaving the Naval College in December, 1826, my father was appointed as a "College Volunteer" to H.M.S. "Challenger," Captain Hayes,* but remained only a month on her books, being transferred in January, 1827, to the "Thetis," frigate of 46 guns, fitting out at Plymouth for South America, under the command of Captain Arthur Batt Bingham.

A slight digression may be forgiven here, to remind the reader that Captain Batt Bingham was the officer who, when in command of the "Little Belt," sloop of war, in 1811, was brought to action in the dusk of evening by the American frigate "President," before war had been declared between the two nations. The "Little Belt" sustained a most gallant action of nearly an hour with the heavy 50-gun frigate, when, the firing coming to an end, the American Commodore, Rodgers, apologized for the mistake, and endeavoured to cast the blame upon the sloop for having fired the first shot. This charge, however, was proved at the subsequent court-martial to be untrue. Captain Bingham could never endure the Americans, or "Yankees," as he preferred to call them, after this episode, and could hardly speak of them with calmness.

There is a good account of this action in James' *Naval History*.

My father's description of joining the "Thetis" is best given in his own words:—

"My mother had done her best to equip me in a manner befitting a young officer of the day. I wore a blue tailed-

* Captain Hayes was celebrated for a brilliant piece of seamanship whereby H.M.S. "Majestic," 74, was saved from wreck on a lee shore on the enemy's coast during the war with France.

coat, cocked hat, sword, and Wellington boots, and over all a blue cloth cloak lined with white, for the weather was cold and snow was lying on the ground. I set out from my Plymouth home for North Corner, off which the ship was lying in the stream, and very proud of myself I felt as the watermen touched their hats. Quickly making a selection of my boat, I went alongside, arriving just before noon. I was received on the quarter-deck by the signal midshipman, who I found was called Tim Sullivan;* he took me up to the officer of the watch, and then to the first lieutenant to report myself. Each gave but a bare acknowledgment, and Sullivan said, 'You had better come down to the berth'—a small room, dimly lighted by candles, off the steerage, in which there appeared to be, sitting round a table, as many as could be accommodated; however, I left hat and sword outside, and room was made for me. I was hospitably offered some grub, and amidst a good deal of chaff I ate away with the others. Suddenly an old quarter-master poked his head in at the door, and said, 'Young gentlemen, the captain is coming,' upon which there was a general rush to the quarter-deck, where were assembled all the other officers and a guard of marines. The captain dashed alongside in his six-oared galley and was soon on deck; all officers took off their hats, and the marine guard presented arms, after which the guard was dismissed, and a general stampede to the lower regions took place. At the end of an hour and a half I was sent for by the captain. Up I went to the cabin in full fig, but as I came into his presence his exclamation was: 'Hullo, youngster! put away cocked hat, coat, and sword; I never allow my youngsters to wear anything but jackets and caps for the first year.' I could not help thinking how much my poor mother's pocket might have been saved had we only known this sooner. On leaving

* Afterwards Admiral Sir Bartholomew Sullivan, K.C.B., who performed good service as the surveyor and pioneer of the Baltic Fleet in the Russian War of 1854-6.

the captain I wandered rather aimlessly about the decks for a couple of hours, when, plucking up courage, I asked the first lieutenant, one Roger Drew, for leave to go ashore to sleep at home, as my mother was residing there, and this was readily granted until the morning, so off I went. This being the day of the funeral of the Duke of York, minute guns were fired from ships and forts."

Early on the morning of February 28th, 1827, the "Thetis" left Plymouth Sound for Bermuda, *en route* for South America. She had on board Sir James Cockburn, brother of Admiral Sir George Cockburn, who was on his way to Halifax to settle some boundary question with the United States.

With the sailing of the "Thetis" the active career of the young volunteer may be said to have commenced in earnest. He was fifteen on the day before sailing, and it is not out of place here to remark that, at that period, volunteers and midshipmen from the College were looked upon with some disfavour by the service generally, and with not a little jealousy by their messmates. There is not much difficulty in explaining this state of things. The College was comparatively a new thing, and before its establishment all midshipmen and volunteers of the first class were nominated to ships by the captains who commissioned them, whereas volunteers and midshipmen who had passed through the College were appointed direct by the Admiralty. The College, therefore, whilst, in all probability, supplying a somewhat better-educated class of officers, struck directly at the root of that system of patronage so dear to the olden school, and was correspondingly unpopular.* The only other College volunteer in the midshipmen's berth of the "Thetis" was John Gore, a son of Admiral Sir John Gore, and the two collegiates had an uphill fight of it in the early days of the commission to counteract this prejudice.

* In that day the executive officers of the Navy were, perhaps, a little deficient in a knowledge of mathematics; the art of navigation, therefore, was somewhat neglected by them, and was almost entirely in the excellent hands of the old "masters." But this state of things certainly improved as a direct result of the establishment of the College. The story of the loss of the "Thetis" tends to show that none too soon had the Board of Admiralty awakened to a sense of their responsibilities in the better education of officers in this direction.

In the midshipmen's berth there were, amongst others, Joseph Denman, a son of Lord Denman the Judge, who was afterwards in command of the Royal Yacht, and rose to flag rank; young Howard, afterwards Lord Carlisle; William Young, a son of the Admiral of that name; Lord George Thynne; Sullivan already mentioned; and, later in the commission, Henry and Arthur Bingham, sons of the captain.

Madeira was touched at, but only a few hours spent there; then Tenerife, where the youngsters were shown the works which Lord Nelson had attempted to carry, a place ever memorable as being the scene of one of his very few reverses.

In due course Bermuda was reached, and here an incident occurred which brought my father into closer touch with Robert Fitzroy, one of the lieutenants of the ship, afterwards of meteorological fame. He had been given charge of the jolly-boat, and having been sent some distance away, returned on board rather later than was anticipated, having encountered heavy squalls and a rising sea. The first lieutenant, one of the old school, a little rough, though kind in the main, pitched into him, and gave him a pretty severe wiggling for being late. Fitzroy happened to be officer of the watch, and had been watching the returning jolly-boat with some anxiety. He had also noticed that she was well handled, so, sympathizing with the boy somewhat, he applied for him to be placed in his watch. From this time a friendship sprang up between the two, and Fitzroy, who was looked upon as a model in carrying on duty, took especial pains to instruct him in the details of the profession.

The night watches at sea were divided by the youngsters somewhat as follows: One hour to "navigation" and taking observations of the stars and moon; one hour, or thereabouts, to chocolate and gingerbread, and one hour to sleep, curled up under the lee of anything that came handy. Fitzroy was a man ahead of his time, and my father owed much of his thorough grasp of seamanship to his early teaching. When he left the ship at Rio in 1828 to take the acting command of the surveying sloop "Beagle," on the death of Captain Stokes, a good deal of my father's happiness went with him. The two did not meet again till October, 1853, when Captain Mends, coming out of the

Admiralty with his appointment to the "Agamemnon" in his pocket, met him in the square.

The monotony and routine of the long passage from Bermuda to Rio was broken by one or two incidents which are perhaps worth recording, as they illustrate the state of affairs which prevailed on the high seas at that time.

When just south of the line, the "Thetis" came upon a suspicious-looking schooner, cruising under easy sail. On the approach of the frigate she made sail, and attempted to escape, but in vain; she was closed with, and directed to heave to. Mends happened to be the midshipman of the boat sent, under Lieut. Fitzroy, to examine her. On the boat's return Captain Bingham's suspicions of her piratical character were increased, and the boat was again sent, fully armed, to search further into her papers and armament. She had a crew of some sixty rough-looking specimens, mostly Spaniards, and a long pivoted 24-pounder was found amidships, which had been concealed by stowing spare sails and spars upon it. In short, she had the appearance of being either a piratical or slaving craft. Her captain held a commission from the Bolivian Republic, and he professed to be on his voyage from St. Thomas to Havanna. A thorough search failed, however, to bring anything incriminating to light, and Captain Bingham was perforce obliged to leave her alone and proceed on his voyage. About a month after the "Thetis" had reached Rio, H.M.S. "Tribune," 46, Captain John Wilson, arrived there, and reported that she had chased a schooner for four days in about the same latitude and longitude as the "Thetis" had met her friend, and that before leaving England she had received orders to look out for, and capture, a piratical schooner that was cruising in that neighbourhood. As may be supposed, Bingham was much annoyed, as he had had the schooner for two or three hours under his guns.*

Another incident occurred also which is interesting, as showing with what suspicion one ship regarded another on the high seas, at that time, until friendliness was assured. I transcribe it from a letter to his mother in my father's own words:—

"When near the equator one afternoon, a large ship, lower yards down, was observed on our starboard quarter, edging

* It was a saying of my father's, "James Watt killed piracy."

down towards us under a crowd of sail. We held on our course, but at dusk found that she had closed on us very much, so, as soon as it was dark, sail was shortened to manageable proportions for manœuvring, and the ship was cleared for action, to my intense joy and excitement, my station being at the after main-deck guns. Soon the big ship closed upon us with the intention of passing under our stern, which our captain frustrated by putting the helm up, to prevent being raked, should she have closed with any hostile intention. As she ranged up and passed us, we saw that she was also at quarters, and had two tiers of ports like a ship of the line.* Captain Bingham hailed to know ship and nation, and the answer came back, 'This is the Honourable East India Company's ship "Fairleigh."' We replied, 'His Majesty's ship "Thetis,"' upon which their music struck up 'Home, sweet Home' and other airs. Both ships hove to, and some of our officers went on board and joined in a dance with the ladies."

On arrival at Rio it was his good fortune to meet his father, homeward bound from the west coast of South America in the "Blanche." Lying there also was the "Ganges," 84, flying the flag of Sir Robert W. Otway, the commander-in-chief of the station. The station, it should be remarked, at that time comprised both sides of the South American continent, not only the eastern side, as in more recent years.

During the first few months of her commission the duties of the "Thetis" consisted in visiting, from time to time, the various ports on the east coast, from Pernambuco on the north, to the river Plate on the south; but in due course the dreaded Horn was doubled, and the western ports visited. During this time the volunteer became a midshipman, and was promoted from the jolly-boat to the second cutter, and thence to the barge. Each boat in turn became

* Captain Bingham, bearing in mind his experience with the "President," may possibly have been unusually cautious, although in his action with her he had prevented the big Yankee from raking his little ship by adroit manœuvring. (See JAMES' *Naval History*.)

a special idol, and absorbed no small share of his very slender income.* He soon began to show an exceptional aptitude for his profession, and was much aided by Lieut. Fitzroy, who occasionally allowed him to take charge of the watch whilst he dined. Captain Bingham also took an increasing interest in him, and frequently catechized him in seamanship, putting him through some evolution, such as shifting a topsail, as if it were blowing, and so forth.

Navigation also was carefully attended to, and the boys made to find the latitude by star altitudes, and the longitude by lunar observations. The daily reckoning was always worked out at the school table, under the half-deck, and the result placed in a basket provided for the purpose, under the charge of the sentry, at the captain's cabin door. There was excellent sport to be had on the station, and what with enjoying the hospitality of the people on shore, and the active exercise of the profession he loved afloat, the time seems to have slipped away very pleasantly.

What a smart British frigate of the old school could do is well illustrated by the following incident, which occurred whilst the "Thetis" was at Valparaiso. She was lying in the southern part of the bay, near the fort then existing, and one of the many revolutions, so common in South American Republics, was going on in Chili at the time. The ship was moored with two bower anchors down, and a stream cable and anchor out astern.† Topsails, courses, jib, and driver were bent; topgallant yards were across with sails unbent. Awnings were spread from stem to stern. All the boats were out and down, lying at the booms, with the boat-keepers in them. A portion of one watch of "liberty-men" had just been landed, and the boats returned. Near her, on the southern side of the bay, lay a smart East Indiaman, which used to cross upper yards with the frigate daily, and imitate as much of the ship of war as was within her power.

The French Admiral Du Campier, in a fine 60-gun frigate, under the white ensign of France, lay a little to the eastward, similarly laid out as to moorings, awnings, etc., whilst further

* £40 per annum was the maximum allowance which his father was permitted by the rules to make him, his pay accumulating till his return to England.

† Probably either to prevent a foul hawse, or to keep her cool by preventing her from swinging head to wind.

to the eastward still, and more in shore, lay the 24-gun brig "Achilles," flying the Chilian ensign and an admiral's flag. It was a hot afternoon, and all on board were in a state of somnolency, when they were suddenly aroused by the pipe and call, "Hands down topgallant yards, furl awnings. Away, cutter's crews," etc. etc. *In a few minutes* awnings were down, topgallant and royal yards crossed, with sails bent, the sails all loosed, hoisted, and trimmed for casting to seaward, quarter-boats and gig hoisted, and boom-boats transferred to the care of the Indiaman. The cables were buoyed and slipped, and as the ship was casting, the accommodation ladder was on its way inboard with some Chilian official of high rank clinging frantically to it.

In about twenty minutes the ship was creeping under the French admiral's stern, setting topgallant studding sails, and it was then seen that she was in chase of the Chilian brig, whose crew had mutinied, and were making off with the ship, on board of which, for safety, the Government treasure had been deposited. The "Thetis" soon began to draw up with her chase, and in three-quarters of an hour from the receipt of the Chilian Government's request for assistance, the first shotted gun was fired across her bows. No notice was taken by the brig of the shot, so a second was fired over her, upon which she at once brought her main topsail to the mast, and lay to.

Captain Bingham hailed that he wished to send a boat on board; the answer came back that no boat would be allowed alongside. However, a boat was lowered with a lieutenant and a party of marines in her, and was proceeding towards the brig, when the mutineers threatened to fire on her, and she was therefore recalled. The brig was then hailed to surrender, and after ample time had been given, a single shot was fired at her, which passed in at one ladderway, through the main-mast, and out at the other. Upon receiving this shot, the brig retaliated with a broadside of round and grape; but as she had momentarily fallen off, and the guns had not been retrained, little or no damage was done. The foremost division of the frigate's main-deck guns were then fired into her, upon which she struck her colours and lowered her topsails, and a lieutenant and party were sent on board to take her back to her anchorage.

This little affair happened in full view of the town and

shipping. The inhabitants were immensely delighted with it, as was also the French admiral, who, the wind having fallen light, sent all his boats out to assist the two vessels in to their anchorage again. The brig lost three men killed and fifteen or twenty wounded in this brief engagement.

The greater part of the commission passed away uneventfully enough. The principal ports in South America, Lima, Callao, Valparaiso, etc., were visited, and, in due course, the time came for the ship to be relieved.

It was whilst lying in Callao Roads, in June, 1830, that the "Seringapatam," 46-gun frigate, Captain the Hon. W. Waldegrave, arrived to her relief. Captain Waldegrave, being senior to Captain Bingham, gave the "Thetis" orders to proceed to Guayaquil, and thence to Valparaiso, on her homeward voyage. The ship left Callao, by the senior officer's orders, on a Friday, a fact which did not pass unnoticed by the superstitious amongst the ship's company.

The following sad story of the loss of the barge and the drowning of the gallant Bingham and the chaplain of the "Thetis," the Rev. W. Hall, I give in my father's words :—

"During the afternoon, as we were running for the entrance of the Guayaquil river before a fresh sea breeze, it was my watch on the forecastle, and I was called aft to take charge of the watch whilst the lieutenant went to his dinner. I had received an invitation to dine with the captain, who with the chaplain, the Rev. W. Hall, was pacing the quarter-deck. Off the entrance to the river lies an islet, then in sight, which, from its resemblance to a corpse laid out, is known as 'Amortajada,' or 'shrouded.' After looking at it for a little, Captain Bingham ordered me to let him know when it most nearly resembled its name and the description given of it in the sailing directions, and then went below, Hall remaining on deck with me. In about an hour I reported to the captain that it resembled the sketch and name given to it. He immediately came up, and, with the chaplain, went on the forecastle gun to look at it, where they remained together for some time. At dinner it was

alluded to again, and they seemed much impressed by its appearance. That evening we anchored off the village of Puna, near the American frigate 'Guerriere,' and her tender the 'Dolphin,' a schooner of war carrying eight guns.

"As midshipman of the barge I received orders to prepare my boat to take the captain, the following day, up to Guayaquil. Commodore Thomson, of the 'Guerriere,'* pressed Captain Bingham to go up with him in his tender, but he declined, wishing to be independent, *especially of American assistance*, though he personally liked the commodore. As we were leaving with the first of the sea breeze and a flood tide, the commodore again hailed from the 'Dolphin' pressing his invitation, which, however, Captain Bingham again courteously declined with a laugh.

"Hall, the chaplain, and Arthur Bingham, the eldest son of the captain, were in the barge with us, and the captain's gig, with a crew of six men, was towing astern. We carried up a fresh, delightful breeze through pretty river scenery, and saw many birds, strange to me, of beautiful plumage. Towards dusk the wind fell, and it became chilly, with a heavy dew, so I obtained permission from the captain to get the oars out, and took an oar myself to keep warm, one man being on the look-out before the foresail on the star-board bow.† We all thought the tide had turned, but we suddenly passed a hulk moored near some trees on the right bank, and I noticed that we passed her very rapidly, evidently showing that the flood tide was still strong with us. I called the captain's attention to this, and he, after a moment's hesitation, ordered the oars to be laid in. It was now very dark, and the lights of the town, now close to, and shining brilliantly in our eyes, made it almost impossible to see any distance ahead. As we looked at them the captain asked if all was clear to leeward. I jumped forward to look

* This was not the "Guerriere" which had been captured from us by the Americans, but a newer ship.

† The barge was schooner-rigged.

for myself, and found that we were right athwart the hawse of a large vessel, so close that it was impossible to avoid her. I called out to put the helm down, but it was too late, the tide was running up at the rate of five or six knots, and, as I spoke, the boat struck the vessel's cable and canted over. I heard Captain Bingham call out loudly, 'For God's sake throw a rope, the boat is going down!' and, as she filled, I was nearly immersed, but her bow was thrown up, and I held on for an instant by the foremast, so that, the large vessel being low, I was enabled to catch hold of her bumpkin brace and scramble on board. I found that she was French, and my own boat's crew had all managed to get on board somehow, including young Bingham, but the barge with my much-loved captain, and the chaplain, had disappeared. The gig, which had been towing astern, had just time to slip her painter to prevent being taken down with the barge. (The bow-man of the gig clutched at Captain Bingham, and caught his cloak, which came off in his hands, the captain disappearing immediately in the tide eddies.) I instantly dispatched the gig up the river in the faint hope of rescuing the missing ones. In half an hour I was joined by our second cutter, in charge of Henry Bingham, the poor captain's second son, he having followed us pretty closely up the river. I also sent her on at once to assist in the search, but all in vain. The United States schooner 'Dolphin' being the only vessel of war present, I proceeded with the boats alongside her, and received every attention that kind sympathy could suggest at the hands of her officers and men.

"I lost almost a second father in Captain Bingham, and a great friend in our much beloved and respected chaplain.

"Having rejoined the ship, we sailed in a few days back to Callao, to report the circumstance to the senior officer, who put in his first lieutenant as acting captain, and sent us off to Rio."

The superstitions of the sailors of that day were not easily dissipated. They had seen how that the leaving of Callao on a Friday had promptly been followed by the sad death of the captain and chaplain, a loss more than ever deplored amongst them when the command of the ship was given to a stranger, instead of to her own first lieutenant.

As the ship, in a light wind, was rounding the north end of the island of San Lorenzo, a little circumstance occurred which added to the gloomy forebodings of the crew. A bird, the size of an English blackbird, but with a white ring round its neck, kept flying round the fore part of the ship. It attracted the earnest attention of the boatswain, Jacob Geach, who after many efforts to catch it when it rested, at last succeeded, and after holding and caressing it for a little time, he let it go, and off it flew to the island. Many of the ship's company took this event as a warning that the ship would be lost; but when she had rounded the Horn, and was approaching Rio, their good spirits returned, as they had evidently decided that her fate would be sealed somewhere in the neighbourhood of the dreaded Cape.

Rio being reached in safety, the commander-in-chief, Admiral Sir Thomas Baker,* who was met there, made great changes amongst the officers of the "Thetis." He put in his own flag captain—one Burgess—as her captain; gave Commander Charles Talbot, of the "Algerine" brig, an acting order as captain of his flag-ship, the "Warspite"; sent the acting captain of the "Thetis" back to his own ship, the "Seringapatam," on the west coast; and gave the first lieutenant of the "Thetis" an acting order as commander to the "Algerine," putting in a Lieutenant Otway, as senior lieutenant, in his stead.

* Well known as the gallant captor, in H.M.S. "Phoenix," of the French frigate "Didon."

CHAPTER III

1830-1831

By a curious coincidence, the "Thetis" was ordered to sail for England on a Friday. So on December 3rd, 1830, she was towed out of the magnificent harbour of Rio, the last harbour which it was her fate to enter, as the custom was, by the boats of the ships of war of all nations lying there.

One of the lieutenants of the ship, George Henry Hamilton, who had been in her as mate and lieutenant throughout the whole commission, being on the sick list, young Mends, as senior midshipman, was ordered to take charge of his watch (and it so happened that he was officer of the watch on the eventful night of December 5th). The following account of her tragic loss, and of the circumstances leading to it, I give in his own words:—

"On getting clear of the harbour of Rio, on December 3rd, we found a moderate easterly wind and a lopping sea outside, so that we could get but little offing, the ship making a considerable amount of leeway on each tack, so that by Sunday morning (December 5th) we had got but a very little to the eastward.

"The easterly wind still blowing, Captain Burgess, instead of adopting the more usual course, and stretching off to the southward on the port tack in search of the S.E. trade, elected to attempt to weather Cape Frio, and get away to the northward, if he could, by that route.* This decision was

* For the benefit of my readers who are not nautical, I must here explain that the ship was sailing from south to north, in a direction, roughly speaking, parallel to the coast. A reference to an ordinary atlas will show at a glance that she could only clear Cape Frio if she had gained a sufficient distance to the eastward of Rio before turning north. The wind blowing on her right hand, or starboard side, she was on what is called by sailors the starboard tack.

imparted to me on Sunday, December 5th, on which day I kept the afternoon watch, during which the captain was dining in the gun-room (as it was then called) with the officers. In the course of the watch a frigate, courses down, was seen on our port bow, steering west. On my reporting this ship to the captain, he, at the table, suggested to the master, Gowdy, edging off a point or so, to which Gowdy gave a somewhat unwilling assent, remarking that the heavy swell had prevented our making much way.* However, the captain gave me orders to keep the ship away a point and a half more, and this I carried out on regaining the deck.

"I ordered the mate of my watch to take a copy of the log-board before it was cleaned off after being copied by the master's assistant, in order that I might work out my day's work on being relieved at 4 p.m.

"As had always been the custom in the 'Thetis,' I placed the result of my work on a slip of paper, and handed it to the sentry on the cabin door, after which I thought no more about it, but lay down for a nap on the lockers, as I had the first watch to keep, till quarters.

"At 8 p.m. I took charge of the deck from Lieutenant de Butts; it was then raining very heavily, and the night was very thick. He told me that the ship had run 8.6 knots at eight o'clock, and the course was N.E. by E. She was under courses, double-reefed topsails, fore and main topgallant sails, jib, driver, and foretop-mast studding sail.

"I ordered the watch to be mustered under the half-deck, and whilst this was being done, I went on the forecastle and looked at the sails, also all round to leeward. In looking at the jib, I got on the weather carronade slide and had a good look to windward; I could see nothing.

"Edward Mallard, master's assistant, was keeping the

* Captain Burgess evidently concluded, from the sighting of this ship, that the "Thetis" must have passed Cape Frio, as his order to "keep her away" involved turning her head more to the westward, and rendered her destruction certain. As a matter of fact, she had not yet done so.

forecastle watch, and I remember telling him to keep a good look-out on the foretop-mast studding sail, and to let me know if it lifted, as it was so dark that I could not see it from abaft. Before going aft I sang out to the forecastle look-out men to keep a bright look-out, especially to leeward, and was answered by all, including Mr. Mallard, with 'Aye, aye, sir!'

"On my way aft I was met at the main-bitts by Thomas Thomas, captain of the main-top, who asked me if I wanted the people kept in the top whilst it was raining so heavily. I replied 'no,' but told him to let them stand just under the ladder, ready at a moment's call, in case I should want the topgallant sails furled.

"I continued my way aft, and had just reached the compass, and seen that the ship was on her course, when the forecastle look-out hailed, 'Land or a vessel right ahead,' and then someone sang out, 'We are close to the land.' I called out to put the helm hard down, and ran to the gangway, where I saw high cliffs right up over our mastheads.

"I shouted down the main hatchway, 'Hands about ship,' and ran aft towards the wheel; as I did so, I met the midshipman of the watch, poor young Henry Bingham, coming up the after ladder; I took him by the shoulder and pushed him back, saying, 'Run at once to the captain, and tell him that the ship is close on shore.' I then ran to the wheel and saw that it was hard down, and that the ship was flying up into the wind, and I felt also that she was in the back swell of the sea, usually met with in deep water close to a precipitous coast.

"Captain Burgess was soon on deck, and called out, 'Man the main clew garnets,'* with what object I have never divined, but I ran forward to see the main buntlines†

* Ropes that haul up the lower corners of the sail to the yard.

† The main buntlines were led down the mainstays in ships of war in those days, and went right forward, a fact to which my father, humanly speaking, owed his life.

manned, which had hardly been done when I heard the crashing of spars ahead, and I instantly broke the men off the ropes, and ordered them to lie down between the guns and close to the bulwarks. This order had hardly been obeyed when the bowsprit came in board, in splinters, and the foremast went about twenty feet from the deck, falling centrally, and taking the main and mizzen-masts with it.

"No man in the fore part of the ship was injured, but the people rushing up the main and after ladders suffered severely, many being killed, including the man at the wheel, who continued to grip it firmly, thus still helping to bring the ship round.

"Notwithstanding the scene of chaos and desolation, the fact that all the boats were destroyed by the falling spars, and the groans of the wounded and dying, the ship's company never lost their discipline for an instant, and on the well being sounded, and it being ascertained that the ship was not leaking, they gave three hearty cheers.

"At this time we had forty-five fathoms of water alongside, and the ship had come round with her head off the precipitous cliffs, which we now guessed must be Cape Frio the summit being some 1500 feet above us.

"The back-lash of sea and wind proved helpful for a time, and we quickly cleared away some of the wreckage, and got two small sails set on the stumps of the fore and main-masts, but they were almost valueless, and the poor old ship was set back, and drifted, a helpless hulk, along to the westward.

"The only light was that reflected by the phosphorescence of the breaking sea on the rocks, but it enabled us to estimate our distance roughly. Under our lee we could make out a point of rocks, towards which the ship was being slowly but surely set.* In the faint hope of bringing her up, the captain ordered one of the anchors to be let go, but in such a depth of water it proved worse than useless.

* See Frontispiece.

"Just before she reached the rocks I was sent down to see that the tiller was to starboard ; I found that the men were at the relieving tackles, and that the helm was as desired. Whilst I was below, the hull of the dear old ship crashed upon the rocks, and there was a great grinding, for the sea was very heavy. I found the sentry over the spirit-room, in which over 800,000 dollars were secured ; I also found the guard on the gun-room door ; there was no panic, and these men remained quietly at their posts. On regaining the deck I found the captain and officers grouped in the starboard gangway, and the captain requested that any who should survive would tell the commander-in-chief that he died doing his duty. As a matter of fact, however, he was saved.

"Orders were then given for as many as could to land, by jumping on to the rocks, and about seventy of us succeeded in doing so, by watching the ship in the send of the sea, and jumping at the right moment. As I had expected from the first that we should probably have to swim for it, I had torn off, from the knees downwards, the bottoms of a pair of old white jean trousers which I was wearing, and had also thrown away my jacket, and torn off my shirt sleeves. I had also got rid of my shoes and hat. Thus prepared, I got on to the starboard quarter gallery, close to the main-brace-standard, accompanied by poor Henry Bingham, who had stuck to me from the moment that the ship had been dismasted. Three of the ship's company were also with me following my lead. As a sea was lifting the ship I called out 'Now!' and jumped. I reached the rocks safely (and one lad), the sea just lifting us clear of the ship, but the other three, including my dear young friend Bingham, had missed their chance, and were gone for ever.

"The anchor that had been let go held the ship a little, whilst she was destroying herself against the rocks ; the cable was therefore slipped, and on being freed she passed round

the point, out of our sight. From time to time, however, we could see the reflected glare of blue lights being burnt on board her, also an occasional rocket thrown up. These lights were of the greatest value and encouragement to those on board, and the credit of using them is entirely due to Sergeant Spencer of the Marine Artillery,* who collected all he could lay hands upon, both in the gunner's store-room and on the half-deck, where a supply was kept, and kept them going at intervals.

"On scrambling with difficulty up the sharp, slippery rocks, I found myself beside Lieutenant George Henry Hamilton, whose watch I had been keeping when the ship struck, he being on the sick list. We all clung together for warmth. Hamilton asked me at once what my reckoning had been at noon, for he knew that I, like himself, was more interested in navigation than most. I quite recollected the results of my day's work, and told him.

"At dawn we all clambered up the precipitous sides of the promontory on to which we had jumped from the ship, and, on gaining the summit, we looked down upon a little rocky cove, in which, in about three fathoms of water, lay the wreck of the poor "Thetis." Her starboard hammock-nettings were just awash, and on the booms amidships were the survivors of her crew who had not yet got ashore, awaiting their turn to be hauled up to the rocks, some fifty feet above, in the travelling bowline which had been rigged between the knight heads† and a boulder on shore.

"The boatswain, Jacob Geach, before mentioned, and the pick of the forecastle men, had succeeded in getting a line to those on the rocks and rigging the bowline, and by noon of Monday, the 6th, all the living were on *terra firma*. A

* Sergeant Spencer lived for many years, and plied a wherry (which, before the days of steam launches, was a more important calling than it has since become) at Gosport Hard.

† Stout timbers which project upwards from a ship's stem, on each side of the bowsprit.

muster was then called, and it was found that twenty-one had perished, amongst them three officers, viz., a lieutenant named Cunningham, who was taking a passage in us, young Henry Bingham, and the paymaster. After prayers had been held, and thanks offered up for our almost miraculous preservation, exploring parties were instantly sent out to ascertain our position. From the crest of the hill above our cove we looked down upon the snug harbour of Port Frio. Litters were roughly constructed of canvas and spars to carry the wounded down, and grass was gathered to make beds for them on the beautiful sandy beach. Wood was also collected for fires at night, and regular watches and guards were told off.

"Towards evening a couple of blacks approached our encampment, if such it could be called, in a small canoe; they were very timid at first, but after a while they brought their little craft ashore, and by her Lieutenant Hamilton was sent to the nearest town on the mainland* to request assistance, food, etc., and then to make the best of his way to Rio to report the circumstances to the admiral. Both these objects were accomplished. Boats were obtained by which the captain took the officers and crew to quarters in the town, leaving Lieutenant Otway, myself, the warrant officers, and about forty petty officers and men in charge of the wreck.

"I, fortunately, found a half calabash or gourd on the beach, which fitted my head exactly and made an excellent hat, whilst the captain of the foretop, who, like most of the rest of the crew, had managed to get into their best clothes, when they saw that all chance of saving the ship had gone, lent me a jacket, until one was made for me out of one of the old ship's sails. The spinal columns of fish, which we found dried and baked by the sun on the beach, did duty for combs. Working parties were formed for gathering fire-

* The high promontory of Cape Frio is an island.

wood, recovering provisions and gear from the wreck, cutting grass, etc. Musters took place daily, whilst at night we all gathered round large fires, and lay on the cut, sun-dried grass spinning yarns till we dropped off to sleep. At dawn a dip in the sea completed our toilet.

“At the end of a fortnight we were taken off by the boats of the ‘Druid,’ 46, Captain Hamilton, conveyed in her to Rio, and thence in the same ship to Portsmouth, where we arrived in March.”*

The survivors of the “Thetis,” officers and men, pending the court-martial on them for the loss of the ship, were transferred on arrival at Portsmouth to the “Victory,” flying the flag of Admiral Sir Thomas Foley, whose flag-captain was Hyde Parker. The court sat for three days, and my father being only nineteen years of age, and an unpassed midshipman, and having been officer of the watch at the time she struck, was very stiffly catechized by the members. He came out of the ordeal, however, with flying colours, and was warmly commended by the president and members of the court for his conduct. They entirely approved both the thorough insight into his profession and grasp of its details which his evidence had shown, and also his coolness and presence of mind when the ship struck, more especially his order to the men to lie down between the guns when he felt that the masts were going, an order which undoubtedly saved many lives. This court-martial gave him an immense start in the service by bringing him under the favourable notice of many of the most rising men of the day in the Navy, which stood him in good stead later on in his career.

The captain of the “Thetis” lost two years’ time, which in those days meant exclusion from further service. The master, who was a good seaman, and who would never have placed the ship in the position which led to her loss had he not allowed his judgment to be overruled by the captain, was placed at the bottom of his list.

The commendation of the members of the court took a practical form, and a very high compliment was paid to my father, for each one of them who was in command of a ship

* See Appendix III.

fitting out made him an offer of a vacancy, and, furthermore, kept the offer open until he had had a little time to select.

His choice fell upon the "Actæon," 26, Captain the Hon. F. W. Grey (a son of the then Premier, Earl Grey), whom he had met and been on a shooting expedition with in South America, when Grey had been in command of the "Heron." Before joining his new ship he passed in seamanship and navigation, and did especially well in the latter subject, coming out the first of a batch of fifteen at the College.

CHAPTER IV

1831-1835

THE "Actæon" was joined by my father at Spithead on April 7th after a brief period of a week's leave, spent with his people in the west country, and on the same day she sailed for the Mediterranean. There were but three lieutenants in the ship, inclusive of the first lieutenant, consequently he was given charge of the third watch, and did that duty throughout the commission, which, though an extremely happy one, was comparatively uneventful.

On her way out to the Mediterranean the "Actæon" was detained for a fortnight off Lisbon, to form part of a blockading squadron which was assembled there, pending the settlement of some question with the Portuguese government. On arriving in the Mediterranean Malta was the first port of call, after which the time was spent between Tripoli, on the Barbary coast, Naples, the Ionian Islands, the Greek Archipelago, Athens, Brindisi, and Constantinople, where, owing no doubt to the personality of her captain, the "Actæon" was frequently employed in attendance on the various ambassadors to the Porte. Among these were Sir Robert Gordon (Lord Aberdeen's brother), Lord Ponsonby, and Sir Stratford Canning, afterwards Lord Stratford de Redcliffe.

An interesting visit was paid to Athens in 1831, when the ship was conveying Sir Robert Gordon from Constantinople to Brindisi on his way home. Athens was then in the hands of the Turks, and the Pasha sent down to the Piræus an escort of cavalry and riding horses for the party, of whom my father was one, to convey the ambassador to the capital. He was much struck with the magnificent appearance of the Turkish cavalry of that day.

During one of their long visits to Tripoli the town was besieged by the Arabs, who brought some heavy artillery to

bear upon the fortifications, the guns being placed in earth-works amongst the date trees. The youngsters of the "Actæon" amused themselves by getting into these earth-works when on shore of an afternoon, unseen, and assisting the besieging force, to their huge delight, to lay the guns. A brisk fire used to be maintained by the Turkish garrison, and I have heard my father say that he was often under as hot a fire there as anyone could wish for. Doubtless had these escapades been discovered, trouble would have ensued with the authorities.

The winter of 1831-32 was spent at Naples, waiting to convey Lord Ponsonby to Constantinople. My father had met him at Buenos Ayres, and also at Rio, and he had taken a short passage once in the ill-fated "Thetis"; consequently both he and Lady Ponsonby were extremely kind and attentive to him, and my father was well mounted during the whole of his stay, and also was enabled to enjoy the best society of the place.

A short visit was then paid to Malta, which was as gay or even gayer a place in those days than it is now. The commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean was Vice-Admiral Sir Henry Hotham, whose flag was flying in the "St. Vincent." The general commanding was that distinguished soldier Sir Frederick Ponsonby, who had been so desperately wounded on the field of Waterloo. Both commanders and their wives seem to have vied with one another to make the time pass as pleasantly as possible—balls, picnics, etc., were the order of the day. Grey, the captain of the "Actæon," was, however, a keen sportsman and a good shot, and sought more scope for his gun than for the exercise of his social qualities; consequently Tripoli, Syracuse with its lake, Corfu with the Albanian hills opposite, the Sea of Marmora, etc., were more visited than Malta; and perhaps it was well that it was so, or the quarterly accounts of the younger officers would have assumed alarming proportions.

Late in 1832 the ship returned to Constantinople in attendance on the ambassador, and found a Russian army encamped on the heights, from the Giant's Mountain to the Sultan's Valley.

It may not be out of place to remind the reader of the causes which led to the presence of this Russian force of 20,000 men on the shores of the Bosphorus. Mehemet Ali,

Viceroy of Egypt, had rebelled against the Sultan, and had dispatched his son, Ibrahim Pasha, with a large force to march through Syria upon Constantinople. The Sultan's army had but recently been remodelled upon the European system, which was extremely unpopular with the older Turks, for which reason, amongst others, he felt unequal, single-handed, to deal with the troops of his rebellious vassal, and in his dilemma appealed to the great Powers to assist him. Needless to say, they each in turn declined to interfere by force of arms, with the exception of Russia, who, perhaps it is equally needless to say, eagerly seized upon the opportunity thus offered, and despatched a small but complete army to the Sultan's assistance. This force was in the habit of using the Sultan's Valley as a drill and parade ground, and the "Actæons" also used it as a cricket ground, so they saw something of the Russians. Discipline was maintained in the Russian army in those days by somewhat barbarous methods, of some of which I give here a description in my father's own words :—

"I have frequently watched with my glass from the deck of the 'Actæon,' when on watch, men being punished with that terrible instrument the 'knout.'

"A space of ground was inclosed by hurdles, such as we use to confine sheep with in England, the prisoner was laid face downwards and secured to a hurdle, the executioner then came forward with a thing like a flail, such as corn is threshed with, only that the hinged part was made of stout leather or hide, or something a little more flexible than wood. The culprit then underwent the punishment, but, although I witnessed many, I never saw one of them get up and walk away when released, they were invariably carried off the ground on stretchers. Another rather curious punishment also prevailed. Oftentimes, when we were playing cricket in the valley, a battalion would fall in without arms, but each soldier carrying a long switch. The men were then formed in open order, two deep in extended position, as for cutlass or single-stick drill, and faced inwards. The culprit, stripped to the waist, and preceded by a non-com-

missioned officer, who walked backwards facing him with a drawn sword, had then to walk slowly down the lines, receiving from each man one or more cuts. The officers of companies walked down outside the lines with drawn swords, and struck with the flat of their swords any men who failed to do their duty by the prisoner to their satisfaction."

As might have been foreseen, the presence of this Russian army at Constantinople soon began to cause a commotion amongst the European Powers, the question being how and when it could be made to withdraw. A fleet was hastily got together in England and dispatched under the command of Sir Pulteney Malcolm, as commander-in-chief (vice Sir H. Hotham, deceased), to the Mediterranean. It assembled, some seventeen sail of the line, in Besika Bay, and threatened to proceed to Constantinople unless the Russian forces were withdrawn. After some little delay a compromise was effected. The British fleet was to leave Besika Bay for a cruise to diminish the appearance of a threat, and the Russian forces were to depart while the fleet was away.

The "Actæon" remained at Constantinople in attendance on the ambassador, and thus witnessed a great firework display and fête in honour of the concluding of a treaty between Count Orloff, the Russian plenipotentiary, and the Porte, on which occasion the Russian fleet of ten sail of the line, various frigates, and smaller craft, was very beautifully illuminated.

The Russian army was embarked with all its material of war in twelve hours by the boats of their fleet, aided by two small steamers.* This operation seems to have had a very great interest and fascination for my father, and I quote his own words concerning it:—

"I watched the embarkation of the Russian army the whole day, scarcely leaving the deck of the 'Actæon' even to eat. I made careful notes of their manner and methods of embarking the cavalry and guns, and most excellent and

* This is the first mention of steam to be found amongst my father's papers.

expeditious they seemed to be, the whole force of 22,000 men with all their stores and belongings being on board before 6 p.m., the embarkation having been commenced at 6 a.m. I little thought, as I watched this, to me, most interesting sight, that it would ever fall to my lot to make all the arrangements for the transport of a British army from Varna, for the invasion of the Crimea.

"The Russian naval commander was Admiral Lazareff, who had been trained in the British service, and was in one of the ships of Nelson's fleet at the battle of Trafalgar. He was a strict disciplinarian, and his ships were in a high state of efficiency."

During one of her many passages from Malta to Constantinople the "Actæon" encountered a strong northerly wind at the entrance to the Dardanelles, blowing right down the straits. Captain Grey being enterprising, determined not to wait for a comparatively fair wind, as was usually done in those days, but to work the ship up, and after some days and repeated groundings she entered the Sea of Marmora on the 145th tack, much to the pride and joy of all hands.

During the period the ship lay in the Bosphorus my father spent much of his time sailing the jolly-boat, which he had fitted with extra canvas, water ballast, etc. He acquired a thorough knowledge of the straits, and came to know every foot on both shores, from the Black Sea entrance to Seraglio Point. His experience stood him in good stead when years afterwards, during the Crimean War, he commanded large vessels, and had to take them through pretty often.

The ship returned to England in the summer of 1834, and was paid off at Portsmouth, after a very pleasant commission, which, if it was devoid of any very exciting events, was rich in experience, for he had kept a lieutenant's watch during the whole of it. His certificate, on parting from Captain Grey, was of the most flattering description.

He remained unemployed till January, 1835, when, on the application of Captain the Hon. H. J. Rous,* he was

* See Appendix IV.

appointed to H.M.S. "Pique," 36, a new "Symondite"* frigate just built, and fitting out at Devonport.

The "Pique" excited an unusual amount of attention. Her captain was, even then, a celebrated sportsman, and the object for which she was first commissioned, namely, to sail a series of trials against H.M.S. "Castor," 36, Captain Lord John Hay (then reckoned the fastest frigate in the service), caused a considerable amount of excitement in civilian as well as in naval circles, and stirred up the sporting instinct ever present in all Englishmen. During the few months that he was unemployed my father had often visited the ship as she lay alongside in Devonport dockyard; and in later years he has frequently described how her beauty, her superb upper deck, which offered such room for working, and her taunt lower masts fired his ambition to belong to her when commissioned. He had made every effort therefore to obtain an appointment, and was happily successful as soon as the pennant was hoisted.

Captain Rous being a popular officer the ship was soon manned by as fine a set of men, and as good a lot of officers, as have ever been got together either before that time or since. To his intense satisfaction my father was at once constituted mate of the upper deck and hull. Fitting and equipping in the middle of winter, with hard frost and a good deal of snow, was anything but satisfactory, and amongst other things it was extremely difficult to give the eyes of the lower and topmast rigging a good "set" on the mast-heads.† The ship's company being as keenly

* I am indebted to Mr. R. E. Froude, of the Admiralty Experiment Works, Gosport, for the following note on the class of ship here mentioned. He writes: "I have looked up the allusion to the 'Symondite' ships in the Transactions of the Institute of Naval Architects, and learn that they differ from their predecessors (which seem referred to as designed on Sir Robert Seppings's system), (1) in having greater beam; (2) in having extreme breadth some way out of water, the turn of the bilge almost entirely out of water. It is incidentally mentioned that the 'Pique' had *no ballast*, the place of which was in part taken by a very heavy construction of bottom, the floors being all close together. This accounts for her remaining fairly water-tight, in spite of rubbing off part of her lower planking. The type of ship was intended to dispense with ballast to a great extent, by virtue of the great beam, thus getting the sail-carrying power with small displacement. The ships seem to have had the character of being jerky, uneasy rollers."

† For the benefit of my nautical readers, this, and the fact that like most "Symondites" the ship had a quick roll to windward, and met with constant gales whilst waiting for her antagonist in the Bay, caused the lower rigging to

interested as their officers in the coming contests, worked with a will, and in February the "Pique" sailed for the Bay of Biscay, where she was to meet her opponent, the "Castor," at Santander.

As will be seen from the following extracts from my father's diary of this period, part of which has fortunately been preserved, a succession of westerly gales rendered it impossible for the trials to commence till March 3rd; but after a short stay at Corunna, where the grave of Sir John Moore was visited, the ship proceeded on her voyage to Santander.

"*February 19th, 1835.*—We anchored in the roadstead of Santander this morning; it is perfectly open to the whole swell of the Bay of Biscay, which is setting in from the N.W. tremendously. The harbour in which the "Castor" is lying runs nearly east and west, protected by a peninsula; about half a mile off the end of this to the eastward is an island, having between it and the point of the peninsula a bar with six fathoms upon it at high water, on which the surf breaks tremendously at times. The general passage is round the island, hauling up inside the bar, and when once in you are perfectly landlocked. During the night the wind came in fresh squalls off the land, causing, with the off-set of the heavy swell setting in, a very nasty sea. We veered ninety fathoms on our small bower, but it held only ten minutes and broke like a thread; the best bower was let go, and a hundred fathoms veered on it, and this has brought her up."

"*February 21st.*—At daylight, the wind light from the northward, we tried to weigh the best bower anchor with the intention of running into the harbour, but the anchor broke in two parts, and we were no sooner away than a

stretch to such an extent that my father recollects a gunner's mate being turned completely round on his way down from aloft in the port main rigging, so that his back was towards the quarter-deck. It became necessary to "set up" the rigging whilst at sea in heavy weather, to secure the masts. Fifteen inches were got of the lower rigging, and three feet of the stays, in this manner on one occasion.

fresh squall came from N.W. with every appearance of a gale setting in. This shook the nerves of our 'hard-weather' old Spanish pilot, who declared the wind would not take us in, consequently our situation was not the most agreeable in the world: the tremendous surf breaking on the bar dead to leeward of us; the wind too scant to allow us to haul up inside it; two anchors gone, with only three cable's lengths off shore to spare. The fore and main tacks were hauled on board and to sea we went, and in this instance I think I may venture to speak unhesitatingly well of the ship, under courses, blowing strong from N.W. with a heavy sea, close at it eight knots, and perfectly dry, being very little off her even keel. In the course of the afternoon the weather cleared and we had a good offing, with anything but an intention of trying our anchors and cables again. I was not myself an eye-witness of the manœuvre, having had the middle watch, but quote from good authority."

"February 22nd and 23rd.—Unpleasant weather, strong breezes from N.W. with a heavy sea."

"February 24th.—The morning came in dull and heavy, winds light, inclining to calms, with more than ordinary swell and a sleepy, sultry feeling in the air; all these indicated something. At seven one of those forebodings to a sailor showed itself in the shape of part of a rainbow close on board, what with us is called a dog. The old ones instantly predicted a heavy gale, but the young thought or cared little about it. At eight the weather blackened to the N.W., and in a few minutes a heavy squall came on, increasing with great violence until 11 a.m., between which time and twelve it blew a tremendous gale. I recollect once before seeing it blow as hard for about two hours, when in poor "Thetis" off the River Plate, but never at any other time. The surface of the water was a mass of white foam, for a time keeping the sea down, which at length rose and became heavy. Having only a close-reefed maintop-sail set partly clewed up and no

after-sail upon the ship, she lay in the trough of the sea, the sprays flying over and over us; at length a green gentleman walked on board, quietly taking with him the weather-head and forecastle netting, flooding the main and upper decks, but doing no further damage. Storm staysails and topsails were set and she rode like a duck. At 1 p.m. the weather began to break; at sunset the pleasing foreboding in the shape of a beautiful rainbow appeared to us—"A rainbow in the morning is a sailor's warning, a rainbow at night is a sailor's delight." At eight the following morning all reefs were out and royal-yards across, standing in for Santander, but the winds would not do for 'Castor' to come out. We found the ship held to windward beautifully; was exceedingly dry and fast withal."

"February 27th.—It will be seen by looking at the chart that our station from its situation is not the most agreeable in the world. Constant north-westerly gales attend us with their usual accompaniments—a heavy swell—to which all who have ever been in the Bay of Biscay can testify. As far as I myself am of opinion, and making use of the little professional knowledge one manages to glean, after a few years of service, from the great naval harvest before us, our ship answers to admiration. Up to to-day, the 2nd of March, we have had nothing but continued gales, with very heavy north-westerly squalls, being nearly the whole time under a close-reefed maintop-sail, storm staysails and trysails; setting, when the weather permits, reefed courses, and carrying them through heavy weather. Before one attempts to expound on her qualities, however, let us give all fair play. The ship is a perfectly new one, just out of an English port, having fitted out in the winter, and quickly so, too; ship's company and officers all strangers to each other, or nearly so, and every particle of equipment new. She goes to compete with a ship three years in commission, with everything in its place; she goes to one of the worst stations to be found, and

remains cruising off the port her adversary is safe at anchor in, a gale of wind blowing the whole time, wearing and tearing everything to pieces. Our rigging we have more than once been obliged to set up during the gales; our decks have worked, and consequently leak, and in many parts of the ship the oakum works out, but not more than in any other ship. Actually to try the ship we could not possibly have had a better opportunity, on every point in which she is actually required to take a part well in. In carrying sail she is wonderfully stiff, not heeling more than three degrees; in a sea she rolls deep and lively, but without jerk; in a head sea, pressed, she sends deep, and throws the spray over her abreast of the fore chains, but hove-to she rides beautifully; however, her qualities cannot be actually decided on until tried against some other ship."

"March 2nd.—To-day the wind has shifted to the N.E., bringing with it clear, dry weather; and our ship is under easy sail, waiting for 'Castor'; all heartily tired of the station, and many sick of the sea."

"March 3rd.—The morning broke clear and fine, with a nice breeze to the northward and eastward. We made the land, but not Santander, upwards of twenty-five miles to the westward or to windward of it, which, after being under low sails in a gale for two or three days with a heavy sea running, may be considered good. I should mention that at 1 p.m. of the 2nd the jib-boom was found badly sprung close to the cap underneath; the spare one was a foot and a half shorter; however, by twenty minutes before midnight we were able to set the jib. Bad work.

"At 2 p.m. we were off Santander, and observed the 'Ringdove' coming out, very soon after followed by 'Castor,' to our great delight. We were at the time under double-reefed topsails and topgallant-sails, foretop-mast staysail, standing in upon a wind—the wind at N.W. All our efforts under that sail to stay her were fruitless, and, after missing

three times, were obliged to wear and hove-to for 'Castor,' the 'Ringdove' being hove-to to windward.

"The 'Castor' passed to leeward of us, shortened sail to double-reefed topsail and foresail, hauled on our weather-bow, and hove-to for our captain to go on board. In the course of an hour he returned with the information received by 'Nimrod' from Lisbon that, after a three weeks' trial, we were to go to Portsmouth preparatory for India. The ship was kept under easy sail for the night, with orders to make sail every morning and start fair.

"March 4th.—At daylight, with a moderate breeze from the north and west, with a heavy swell, we found ourselves dropped well to leeward of both vessels, being obliged to make sail to get up to our station at 9 a.m. 'Castor' made sail under single-reefed topsails, topgallant-sails, courses, jib, and driver, and backed mizzen-topsail for us to come up. We made sail with whole topsails, etc. When about two cables dead to leeward she filled, 'Ringdove' being about two cables to windward of 'Castor.' The breeze was a moderate one, with a head swell, but inclined to freshen. In the course of an hour she drew a little ahead, but we weathered a little on her. At about 11 a.m. we took in our first reef, which occasioned us to drop; however, after this we forereached and weathered, then the jib halyards went. 'Castor' made signal to reef, which acted rather against us, as we did not heel, nor did any of our spars, except the topgallant-masts, complain. The jib was set again, and carried away a second time, the breeze now being a strong working one. At 4.30 'Castor' shortened sail, then about half a point on lee bow two and a half miles off, and when we drew up abreast of her she was about three-quarters of a mile on lee beam; had she tacked I think she would have passed nearly a quarter of a mile to windward of us, consequently, during the day's sail, she may fairly be said to have had an advantage. We carried slack helm throughout the

day, going against a very long, heavy head sea between seven and eight knots. We tried during the latter part of the day to trim, by transporting the after guns on each deck further forward, but it did not appear to answer at all, making her carry a worse helm and deadening her way. 'Ringdove' kept her station well to windward all day, until the loss of a man overboard obliged her to heave-to."

"*March 6th.*—Not having time yesterday to commit to paper all that passed, with the result of the day's trial, I must trust to my memory for the particulars. At 9 a.m. the two ships and brig were under easy sail on the starboard tack, with the wind to the northward, when the signal was made to steer west and make all sail. 'Castor' under single-reefed topsail, topgallant-sails, jib, foretopmast-staysail, and driver; 'Pique' under whole topsails, topgallant-sails, royals, jib, and driver; starboard topmast and topgallant studding-sails. 'Castor' headed fast. We brought the foremost guns aft, four on maindeck, four from the forecastle, with all the shot on each deck, hammocks and bags being stowed in the steerage, and ship's company all sitting aft; but she still left us, and by 4.30 p.m., when she shortened sail, we were three miles astern, consequently being decidedly beaten. The 'Ringdove' remained on 'Castor's' weather-beam throughout the day.

"To-day at 9 a.m. a fresh breeze at N.W. with a head sea. 'Castor' two cables on our lee beam. Both started under double-reefed topsails, courses, jib, foretopmast-staysail, and driver. At 9.30 we set fore and main topgallant-sails, 'Castor' set main only. Ten, a stiff breeze, and going nine knots close at it—tye and tye, sometimes one forging a length ahead, sometimes the other. At twelve going ten knots, bearing and distance the same at starting exactly. At 2 p.m. 'Castor' had forereached two cables but not weathered, when she shortened sail for the day. I do not suppose a prettier sight could be witnessed, or more pleasing to the eye

of a sailor, than to behold two handsome frigates under that sail, close abreast of each other, or neck to neck, like two thoroughbred horses striving their utmost to outdo each other, the sprays flying over each. We stood up well under our canvas, never heeling more than seven degrees, and might have carried with ease another reef out but for our rigging, which, being new, has given out considerably. It is almost needless to mention the interest excited on board a man-of-war in competition with another; but on the present trial of the two *chef d'œuvres* of the best builders England can boast of, the interest is more than ordinary."

"*March 7th.*—During the last night the breeze gradually freshened into a gale. At eight this morning having only storm sails set, our consort, the 'Castor,' being eight or nine miles on the weather quarter and 'Ringdove' four or five on weather beam. The sea is exceedingly heavy, consequently we are tumbling about a great deal, and it is with great difficulty I am able to write. A ship in a gale at sea has all that is awful and magnificent, as well as disagreeable and anxious. It is a wonderful thing for the young at the work to be tumbling and rolling about, whilst they are careless of everything, not knowing the injury a ship is doing to herself; far different is it with those who have experienced such before, and, knowing where every rope leads to and how all is secured, feel that every time she mounts a sea and again falls into the abyss between two, she strains all her muscles. All is comfortless; things roll off the table, perhaps your dinner in your lap, bed wet, decks, as ours are, leaking, and consequently our mess places wet and nowhere to sit down; in fact a gale is fine in idea, and that is all."

"*Monday, March 9th, Bay of Biscay.*—It appears fated that gales of wind are to try the ship as well as our patience, for it has been almost a continual gale for three weeks, with very short intervals of fine weather. The ship is at this moment lurching so heavily that I can hardly manage to

write ; everything is tumbling about, decks leaking, clothes all damp, hammocks dirty as well as ship, our rigging quite slack, and consequently the masts not quite as safe as they might be, with many other disagreeables caused by an incessant gale and heavy sea. Much as I love the profession and a sea life, these, I confess, are almost enough to make one forswear it, particularly in the rank of a mate without a single place to retire to, or one other comfort besides his desk and chest. What must our fathers in the service have gone through when cruising off enemies' ports during the war? It must indeed have been enough to sour all tempers for ever, and in my idea easily accounts for those violent dispositions that showed themselves, particularly when education was much less, if even thought of, and consequently resources in themselves less numerous. I have just worked my reckoning, and swallowed my afternoon's potion in the shape of coffee with its accompaniment of a few nuts, whilst one of my messmates is growling away at his state in life for my amusement, and closes his oration by declaring that he will go to the coast of Africa and die or be made rather than stay in large ships as a mate without prospect of advancement. *Telle est la vie !*"

"*Tuesday, March 10th.*—During the whole of the last night the weather was exceedingly bad, strong gales with heavy squalls, accompanied by hail and sleet. I came in for a small share of it, dawn bringing in something more like fair weather. Shortly after eight the weather cleared up beautifully, and 'Castor' was descried from the masthead a long way to leeward ; we bore up to close her, and I am happy to say have again beaten her. We are now on our way to Corunna to refit and trim, etc., preparatory to our trial previous to going to England. For a wonder the ship is pretty steady, weather fine, and a nice breeze (which to anyone who has ever experienced a gale is a great relief.) The ship herself appears delighted to rest after tossing and

tumbling about, wearing and tearing everything to pieces. Here we are, four old mates, growling over the service, but most of us not despairing. I wish some of our aristocrats could look upon us, and if *we* are not as good as many of the things that are made lieutenants, I would venture to eat my coat."

"*March 26th, Bay of Biscay.*—Our trial with 'Castor' has been more satisfactory to-day than any previous one. With the wind to the eastward blowing strong, treble-reefed top-sails and courses, we headed and weathered considerably in six hours; but I wish it was all over, at least for a time, as we have had such incessant bad weather during the whole cruise as to want a complete refit in the rigging, besides which, being a new ship, the decks leak, and everything is dirty and uncomfortable. However, as it is all for the good of the service, one shouldn't growl."

There seems to have been but slight difference between the ships; if a head sea was encountered "Castor" had the advantage; if the water was smooth "Pique's" superiority was manifest. The contests ended in April, and the frigate returned to Spithead to await orders.

CHAPTER V

1835

AT this time a change took place at the Admiralty, Lord Auckland becoming the First Lord, with Captain Frederick Grey, my father's old captain in the "Actæon," as Private Secretary. Needless to say his prospects of promotion became brighter. Captain Rous advised him to write to Grey, and gave him a certificate to enclose, in which he said "he has been noticed by every officer in the ship for his zeal, activity, and professional knowledge." Grey wrote a kind answer in reply, promising to do what he could for him.

The "Pique" now went into Portsmouth harbour to refit; her rigging was surveyed, and everything made good, and in due course she was ordered to fit out for the conveyance of the Governor-General, Lord Gosford, to Canada. In the meantime my father saw a little of his home, and a great deal of his friends, the Austens, who extended a most hospitable welcome to him at their house at Alverstoke.

On the appointed day the ship was sent to Spithead, whither she went in tow of a steamer, although she was by no means ready for sea. Anchors, in the place of those lost, had but just been received from the yard, topmasts were struck, topgallant-masts were towing alongside, whilst artificers from the yard were hard at work throughout the vessel; nearly all her boats, also, were left hauled up in the dockyard. Here she remained for some time, a change in the Ministry delaying the appointment of the Governor-General.

Here I find I can revert again to my father's diary, and under date Friday, July 24th, he says:—

"Yesterday morning we left Cowes with our commissioner on board, and, thanks to a good wind, we are now well clear of the English Channel. On Wednesday evening last we ran in from St. Helen's with a fine easterly breeze, but we

made little sail and passed slowly in front of Anglesey. On directing my glass thither I could see all my friends come out on the verandah to see the 'Pique' pass, and I could distinctly discern each person, and saw the handkerchiefs waved.

"As I previously mentioned, a fine breeze ran us to the Lizard by twelve o'clock last night, since which the wind has become light and changed to north-west, but the day is fine in the extreme, with just sufficient swell to assist our passengers' organs of digestion."

"*Saturday, July 25th.*—The day has been beautifully fine, with a light north-easterly breeze, and a great number of vessels of all nations are in sight. We are making good progress with every stitch of canvas set, the ship going between ten and eleven knots, a marvellous speed considering the lightness of the breeze, but 'Pique' always does well in smooth water."

"*Sunday, July 26th.*—We are still making rapid progress, going between nine and ten knots, on our course; the weather is damp and unpleasant."

"*Monday, July 27th.*—Since I took up my pen yesterday 'Pique' has run upwards of 240 miles. It is amusing to see the joy depicted on every face when the ship is going like this, and showing her paces; all are interested; even our passengers have got over their sea-sickness, and mirth reigns throughout."

"*Tuesday, July 28th.*—Our rattling breeze has at length wasted its strength. We may, however, consider ourselves lucky at this season of the year to have had such a run—214 miles have been made since yesterday."

"*Wednesday, August 5th.*—Want of subject pleads my excuse for omitting the last day or two. We have exceedingly damp, foggy, unwholesome weather, generally, I

believe, experienced on approaching the Newfoundland Banks. Our winds have been alternately fair and foul, fresh and light; sometimes going over eleven knots an hour, at others only two or three, but on the whole we have made great advance. The weather is particularly trying at night, when the fog is so dense that in an hour or less everything one has on is wet through, at the same time that one is in a profuse perspiration from the quantity of clothes one is obliged to wear."

"*Thursday, August 6th.*—Ship going between ten and eleven knots, and as steady as a rock. We are steering a little to the northward of Newfoundland for the Straits of Belle Isle; the weather is beautifully clear and dry, but very cold. I had the middle watch last night, and about one o'clock the weather suddenly became much colder, with rain, but at 3 a.m. comparatively mild again. The transition was so sudden that I imagine we must have been in the vicinity of ice."

"*Saturday, August 8th.*—Being in four watches it came to my turn last night to remain in, but at daylight this morning we were all roused out of our hammocks to witness a stranger from the northern regions in the shape of an iceberg. The morning being beautifully fine and clear, with a light breeze, we stood on directly for it until within about 400 yards, when, finding our reception an extremely cool one, we tacked and stood away. I cannot say it quite came up to my expectations, or to what I had generally heard their appearance was. The sun had not long risen, but its colours were not various; it looked more like an island of snow, and certainly gave me quite a chill to look at it. We supposed it to be about 90 or 100 feet high, and about thrice that length, with two or three conical points. Looked at through the glass it glistened greatly. At about 10 a.m. another was reported on our lee beam, which appeared a very long and low one, but much more extensive than the

former. It really makes the charge of an officer of the watch a very anxious one, running, as we are, between nine, ten, and eleven miles an hour during the night, with every chance of tumbling accidentally upon one. The air is exceedingly cold, but clear and dry. We are about the eastern edge of the Newfoundland Bank, in longitude 50 W., latitude 49 N."

"*Wednesday, August 12th.*—In the Straits of Belle Isle. The general interest and excitement that invariably prevail on board a man-of-war on making land and visiting places we have not seen before, will, I am sure, be a sufficient reason why I have for two or three days omitted using my pen, particularly as during that time I have been gathering food for it. I mentioned on Saturday last the sight of an iceberg as a novel curiosity, but since then they have become a little more familiar to us. On Sunday after breakfast, with a fine westerly breeze, the air became suddenly very sharp and cold, which was soon accounted for by three large icebergs being seen on the weather bow, but so far to windward that we could not approach them. At 1 p.m. I relieved the deck, and was quite certain I could see the land to windward, but the haze made it a difficult matter for me to make others see it and believe it. However, between two and three it was considered certain, and I shaped the course to order and made all sail. A very large iceberg next showed itself right ahead, but as I dined in the cabin at 4 p.m. I left the fun for others. Just after I had gone below my land was said to have vanished, and consequently a laugh was raised at my expense, but our worthy captain was on my side, and we still considered our eyes had not deceived us. The fact is, people read so much about the fog banks, which are so peculiarly like land on the coast of Newfoundland, that they very justly supposed we were mistaken. However, in about an hour it cleared up, and the lost land came

again to view without doubt. We now came close up to the iceberg, which really was a large one, about three times larger than the one before mentioned, and, as the sun occasionally threw its rays on it, looked beautiful. As we ran past we fired a shot at it. There were several small lumps to leeward just showing themselves above water, and which could hardly be seen at night, consequently very dangerous. The land was very soon made out, and two islands, called White's Islands, on the N.E. coast of Newfoundland.

"During the night it blew strong, and we kept under easy sail in the entrance of the Straits of Belle Isle, and near the island from which the straits take their name. On Monday we carried all sail against a foul wind working into the straits, tacking alternately on the coast of Labrador and that of Newfoundland. The features of the former are nothing remarkable; the land is high, and here and there snow is still lying. The latter is low towards the shore, but much higher inland; the whole of its shores are lined with drift and wreck timber—the remains of many an unfortunate vessel. Here and there are apparently fir trees, but not growing thickly. We found the shore bold to the northward, and approachable very near, but reefs run off to some distance on the southern.

"Yesterday morning we found that during the night we had got well to windward, and stood in on the Labrador shore to a place marked on the chart as Ship Bay. When pretty close a squall came down off the hills and carried away our jib-boom. We tacked off, shortened sail, and then ran back into the bay under a cape called Ship Head. The land immediately round this and a few neighbouring bays is remarkable as being of a reddish colour as well as the cliffs, and the sailing directions for it are very good and exact. Here we anchored, and as many of us as the duty of the ship could spare went on shore. The first object that

struck our attention was a Protestant gravestone over the remains of a woman called Jane Odell. On crossing the isthmus we found a cottage, and its inmates Irish; the father had been living here thirteen years, and last year buried his wife, whose tombstone I have just mentioned. Near the cottage were the sheds for curing the fish taken and the seal. In the little bay were numerous boats, some belonging to a party of Frenchmen who had overstepped the fishing bounds, but live by the sanction of the English on the coast. They were much alarmed when they saw us, and imagined we were going to take them. They were soon, however, relieved from their fears. After a little conversation they sent off, as a present, a quantity of codfish and capelin, for which they got in return some biscuits, rum, and fowls, etc. The whole country round was covered with varieties of moss, and most fatiguing to walk over, sinking under every step. To the eastward from the ship is a river, extending up between the hills several miles, and a great resort for seal. One of our boats went up with a shooting party two or three miles, and described it as being pretty. They found some wild duck, but it is out of season for them now; large flights of curlew were about, and a great many were shot. It appeared that on standing into the bay we had gone very near a sunken rock not mentioned in the chart; we did not find it, but the old Irishman declared as to its existence. This morning we weighed, and are working up against a westerly wind. It is now nearly seven o'clock, and I am just come down from attending the remains of one of our shipmates to a watery grave—the second master. He was taken ill only yesterday morning, poor fellow, and died during the night, having ruptured a blood-vessel in the brain. I do not know a more impressive sight, or anything that so works on the feelings, as a funeral at sea."

"Thursday, August 13th, 1835.—We have made little or no

progress since yesterday, having had light, foul winds all night. At daybreak this morning land was plain on both sides of the strait, but towards eight the breeze freshened, and there came on one of those dense fogs so peculiar to the coast of Newfoundland, that we could see very little more than twice the ship's length around us, and sometimes not so much. In the course of the forenoon the breeze freshened considerably, and we must have been going between ten and eleven knots—at eleven o'clock she was going eleven; at a quarter past we found ourselves close aboard of the land, and momentarily we were almost in the breakers, which soon showed themselves on two reefs, on both the lee and the weather bows. As quick as lightning the hands were turned up to 'about ship,' the helm put down, and the captain tacked her as coolly as if it had been in the open sea on a fine day. The instant we were about, and had time to look about us, we found ourselves in only seven fathoms of water, and just clear of the rocks; one minute more and she would have been a lost ship, and perhaps many of us would have met a watery grave. The great danger of our situation at such a moment was only equalled by the coolness and presence of mind, combined with the ready hand of a thorough sailor, that our worthy chief displayed; instead of being the least disconcerted, he gave momentary time for the hands to fly to their stations, the helm went down, and round went the mainyard flying. Oh what a sight for a sailor! I was sitting with some messmates in the berth writing, when I heard the captain call out, 'Hands about ship'; somehow or other I could not mistake his tone. I said, as I flew out of the berth, "We are close to the land, I am sure they have discovered it," and for a second, as I jumped up the ladder and looked at the rolling sea, my heart fluttered, but its feelings were soon overcome by the sense of duty and exertion called for from officer and man on such an occasion. When I saw we were all right, I could not but laugh as

I looked round on all the faces that brightened up as they beheld the danger they had just barely escaped."

"7 *p.m.* The weather is quite as thick as ever, but we are now putting her under easy sail for the night, as the passage is rather too narrow to be bold with. I have the middle watch, and, as you may suppose, it is one of great anxiety, being the responsible person."

"*Friday, August 14th.*—The wind has at last changed for a fair one; not really that we should complain, for we have made a particularly good passage so far for this season of the year. I have little to add of any interest; indeed, I must reserve the greater part of my paper to recount what we see of the mighty St. Lawrence."

"*Sunday, August 16th.*—On Friday evening our breeze freshened considerably; during the whole of that night and until yesterday noon, we were running at the rate of nine, ten, eleven, and twelve miles an hour; we had intended taking the northern passage between Anticosti (the island in the centre of the river's entrance) and the coast of Labrador, but having run a little too far to leeward during the night obliged us to bear up for the southern. We passed Anticosti yesterday afternoon. It appears an island of considerable extent, but it has not one single harbour or a feature deserving notice, being a plain, flat island, excepting towards the western end, where a jumble of hills present themselves as rather remarkable. It is covered with a stunted pine, has two lighthouses, one on the south-eastern, the other on the western extremity; the shore is bold, but lined by sunken rocks, in fact is considered one of the greatest dangers in the approach to the river. Many a poor brother sailor has met a watery grave on its shores, and as many more have died of starvation when landed there; but now provision houses are built at intervals along its coasts, and open to the cravings of the shipwrecked mariner. The whole of the

approach to the St. Lawrence has for many years been in want of lights to ward off the dangers that lie in its vicinity, but it is only very lately that an attempt has been made to improve it by such, consequently innumerable have been the wrecks, and they still constantly occur. At daylight this morning we found ourselves on the southern shore of the St. Lawrence; the wind fortunately came directly off, enabling us to run along it the whole day, sometimes blowing fresh, and going eleven to twelve miles an hour. The scenery was very fine, the land being from 500 to 800 feet high, and wooded to the water's edge, every here and there a pretty river discharging itself from a thickly-wooded valley, with an occasional small waterfall, and now and then a cottage or two, the abode of fishermen and pilots; two of the latter tried to cut us off, but as we took ours on board last night they were disappointed. At noon the wind failed altogether, leaving us becalmed a half-mile off shore. We were soon espied by some fishermen who came alongside with their day's sport; in our mess, for six pounds of bread, a piece of salt beef and a little rum, they gave us six fine codfish and a halibut weighing about sixty or seventy lbs.; what would you good people think of such a thing at home? The wind is still light, and we are going quietly along the bank of the river; the scenery is much the same, being a mass of hills richly clothed as before."

"*Sunday, September 6th, Quebec.*—In my last day's account you will remember we had passed the island of Anticosti and were fairly entered the mighty St. Lawrence, having run several miles along its southern shore. On the 17th and part of the 18th winds baffled, but the tides assisted us in gaining ground. On the afternoon of the 18th the wind became fair, but with a quantity of heavy rain, and so thick that although the breeze was fresh we were obliged to reduce sail and proceed slowly until 1 a.m. of the 19th, when it held up for an hour and we observed the lighthouse

on Green Island, the entrance to the narrows of the river; we instantly bore up and made the best of our way, but the wind fell to a calm, leaving us at 8 a.m. no further advanced than between Green and Red Islands, the two which form the entrance to the narrows. By noon the wind was from the westward, consequently foul, and tide also. We dropped anchor close to a group of prettily wooded islands called the "Brandy Pots," a name our pilot liked excessively; their name, I suppose, affording a strong similarity to a pot he appeared very fond of, as he managed by dint of perseverance to be drunk from the time he came on board until leaving the ship. Directly after dinner, the wind veering a little to the northward only increased our anxiety to proceed, consequently up went the anchor and a fresh breeze ran us on about thirty miles, the scenery on both sides being particularly beautiful; the northern shore being higher towards the water, and only partially inhabited, but that on the southern more picturesque, lower, and one continued line of habitations the whole way, like an immensely long village. All the houses were painted white, and the land apparently nicely cultivated. Occasionally you see perhaps a hundred houses in a group, quite a small town; these we understand belong principally to the French Canadians, with, as a matter of course, Paddy from Cork, who is to be met with in all parts of the world. On the 20th we got as far as the narrowest part of the river; that is, by shoals, the river itself being eight miles broad, but the channel only a quarter of a mile. Several vessels going down ran rapidly past with the ebb, all bound with their cargo of timber for England. During the night the wind became fair, and freshened into a strong breeze, but our pilot would not take us up until the flood tide made, having to run over several miles of flat. We could not consequently weigh until noon of the 21st, when we ran on without sail several miles in four and a half fathoms water. At half-

past two the water deepened to eight fathoms, and we made all sail, but it came on to rain so heavily and thick that we lost sight of many very beautiful islands, and even those we did pass very close to I could devote little or no attention to, being in charge of the watch, and the wind flying about in all directions. Towards the evening the weather cleared a little and the rain held off, disclosing to us the most attractive scenery—I will not say magnificent, or grand, or beautiful, but prettily interesting to a degree. We had got as far as Orleans Island, and were cruising on its southern shore between it and the main; the passage about one and a half miles wide, the country well laid out and thickly studded with houses, each with its garden and hurdled piece of ground, looking, after the rain, a bright green. Several vessels were in the same passage with us running up, adding greatly to the interest of the scene. About eight o'clock the wind failed, and tide began to set against us, which obliged us to anchor about a quarter of a mile off shore. After four, and as soon as I had got my habiliments changed from wet to dry, I took my glass to look at the land as we passed. I saw the occupations of many families—some driving their cattle home for the night, some sawing deals, some washing clothes, children playing about in all directions; but what amused me more than any, was a whole family turned out to witness a fine grunter apparently just killed and hanging beside the door of a whitewashed cot, looking as clean and nice as possible."

"*Sunday, September 20th.*—Running out of the river. Each time that I take my pen to continue my journal, so often do I find I am obliged to retrace in my memory the numerous events it contains, but my good mamma will, I hope, give me full credit for the good intentions I have so frequently expressed, and which as frequently have been frustrated by something or other of an unavoidable nature. I will continue from my last paper—our passage up the St.

Lawrence ; then our arrival at Quebec ; the reception our royal commissioner met with, as well as ourselves ; how we passed our time ; a hint or two about the inhabitants ; and, lastly, our leaving.

“ I see my last subject was the killing a pig, and surely a glorious sight was it, and worthy of remark, particularly after a cruise. We were on the south side of Orleans Isle, that beautiful spot just below Quebec, and which splits the river in two directly before one reaches the city ; here we anchored until the tide should again favour us, running now strong ebb and continuing so seven hours, there being only five hours flood. At a little after four the following morning, 22nd, we again weighed, although without wind, but to allow the current to take us up, which it did rapidly. At seven a breeze favoured us, but at nine the tide became too strong for us, and we were obliged again to anchor about eight miles from Quebec, which yet remained shut out of view by a high point called Point Levi. A boat soon came down, but, to our surprise, with a quarantine officer to tell us we had improperly passed the quarantine ground, and obliging us to send a boat back for a certificate of health some twenty or twenty-five miles, causing great delay and the loss of one tide. This was about the most ridiculous affair possible, for, without asking a single question as to disease or not, up my gentleman comes up the side, shakes hands with the first person he meets, tells us this and goes back, himself and companions, to Quebec, where he says the ship may not go. Was there ever so absurd a quarantine law ? We amused ourselves looking at the little streams, or what would be called in England small falls, that ran down the banks of the river, which were wooded to the water, with here and there some pretty cleared patches, enclosures, and houses.

“ At 4.30 a.m. on the 23rd, after making a few tacks, the city of Quebec came full in sight to the west, with its tin tops

glittering high in air in the rays of the morning sun, and the citadel towering proudly over all on the steep and lofty Cape Diamond. At a little after seven we dropped anchor close under the town abreast of the King's Wharf, and began as soon as possible to get the ship ready for the disembarkation of his Excellency Lord Gosford and the royal commissioner. Curiosity and anxiety to a degree soon displayed themselves in the inhabitants, who thronged the heights, wharfs, windows, tops of houses, etc., to catch a glimpse of their new Governor, who had become beloved and admired by us all in so short a passage, and was walking about in the attire of an English country gentleman, conversing familiarly with everyone, and expressing his regret at being obliged to leave. Two o'clock was the hour fixed for his landing. A guard of honour was sent to the landing-place to await him, and all the military staff assembled in regimental attire. At 2 p.m. our yards were manned, the guard drawn up and barge ready. All officers assembled to see him away, but before he went over the side he walked round to each individual, old and young, and gave them a hearty shake of the hand, expressing his best wishes to all and open house when we liked; and the barge pushed off under a salute."

CHAPTER VI

1835

DURING the stay of the "Pique" at Quebec the kindest hospitality was shown to her officers and men, who came in for all the gaieties incident to the arrival of the new Governor-General and the departure of his predecessor, Lord Aylmer, who was to return to England in the ship.

My father did not care to fill his journal with accounts of the dinners, balls, picnics, cricket matches, etc., which were got up in honour of "the jolly Piques," as they came to be called. One sad incident, however, which cast a heavy gloom over all this pleasant time, is recorded in his usual careful style:—

"We had been to dine with the officers of the 66th Regiment, whom we found a most agreeable and pleasant lot. We were on board again by midnight, and when the others had gone below I remained in conversation with poor Mann, who had been keeping the first watch for one of those on leave. His watch had just expired and his relief been called, and we chatted together until the latter should make his appearance on deck. The cry of 'A man overboard!' suddenly roused us both; he ran to the gangway, I threw off my coat to follow, but by the time I had got there the sentry called out, 'The officer is over too, sir!' and poor Mann shouted to me from the water, as he was swept under the stern, to 'let go the lifebuoy,' which I instantly did, and with others jumped into the boat which had brought us off, and which was immediately lowered. But no sign of either of the men was to be found. The ebb tide was running very strongly, and both lives were lost. It appeared like a dream

to me, and I could hardly realize it, until, on returning from our fruitless search, I found poor Mann's jacket and hat at the bottom of the ladder, where he had coolly taken them off, and heroically jumped into that swirling stream to the rescue of his shipmate. He was a fine, handsome fellow, full of vigour; a zealous and active officer. I lost a sincere friend in him, and one in whom the strongest feelings of Christianity and kindness to his fellow-creatures were stamped. His loss is irreparable in our mess."

This sad event was a great check to the gaiety of all, and was especially melancholy for my father, upon whom (as the great friend of the deceased officer) devolved the hard task of writing to inform his friends of the tragic event.

On Thursday, September 17th, Lord Aylmer and his suite embarked with the usual honours, and at 3 p.m. the ship weighed from Quebec, amidst the general regret of those on board at leaving a place where so much hospitality, attention, and real kindness had been shown them.

The journal continues:—

"*Monday, September 21st.*—We are now nearly entering the Straits of Belle Isle, which we so lately passed with anxiety on our way to Quebec; we have a fine breeze. What birds of passage are sailors! It appears but a dream that we have been at Quebec, and all the gay scenes there seem as part of it, and now we are retracing our steps to Old England—that happiest of lands! The more I see abroad the more I love my own country!

"Sailors and soldiers have no business with politics, therefore I do not enter into the political state of Canada, more than to say that they appear a happy and determined race of people, disturbed only by a few factions, disorderly ragamuffin leaders, who seem to wish to usurp the government instead of having one from England; but the people are loyal to a degree."

"*Thursday, September 24th.*—When I last used my pen

in this service I could but ill foresee the events that have arisen, or the startling circumstances which have taken place. They would afford ample subjects for any writer, but are, I fear, only thrown away on the blockhead who wields this pen in description.

“In the first place, then, I will thank God that I, with my shipmates, am spared to record the miraculous escape poor ‘Pique,’ as well as her inmates, have had from being lost on the barren, inhospitable coast of Labrador. On last Tuesday morning the weather thickened, but a fine breeze ran us on for the Straits of Belle Isle; towards noon the weather cleared, disclosing to us the coast of Newfoundland on the starboard hand; but so near were we to it as to exclude the possibility of our seeing the Labrador side until the afternoon. By 3 p.m. the Labrador coast was in sight, and the different known points were seen, and we congratulated ourselves on the good ‘landfall’ we had made, for we could now reasonably hope to run through the Straits at night, whether clear or not. As it grew dark the weather became very thick, with rain, and a much fresher breeze from the N.W., cheering us with the prospect of a fine run when clear of the land. I turned in about nine, or a little after, and very soon fell asleep, being tired, the duty I had been on keeping me walking the whole day, as duty generally will if properly entered into. I had not been asleep very long before I was roused by a tremendous shock in my hammock, and a crashing noise which lasted a few moments. I heard the voice of the officer of the watch call ‘All hands shorten sail!’ and the boatswain’s mate and several other voices repeating it as I threw myself out. I pulled on trousers, jacket, waistcoat and hat, found an old pair of shoes, which should never be forgotten (for people unaccustomed to go without them are ‘unmanned’), and flew up on the maindeck, and from thence to the upper. The weather was very thick, but on

looking over the larboard side I could see the surf breaking on a reef of rocks about fifty yards from us; I could not, however, devote my attention to it, my duty leading me on the maindeck to get the pumps rigged, etc.

"Now was a time for men to work and show themselves, and set-to they did, in right good earnest, all understanding that our situation was a very dangerous one. All sail was taken off her, but as she appeared to move, and the wind was rather along shore than otherwise, some sail was again made with the intention of throwing her head off. There was silence throughout the ship, when a voice on the upper deck called out, 'She goes off!' which was echoed from mouth to mouth, and the ship's company gave three hearty cheers. It was, however, too good to be true, for her motion was only that of getting harder on. Sail was shortened again, and all furled, and it was then seen that she was holding amidships. Fresh water was then started from the tanks, seventy tons, and the pumps were manned by marines, officers, and passengers indiscriminately, all working their utmost for the common good. The poor ship now began to thump and struggle for it very violently, which I am sure, if other hearts felt as mine did, made many ache for her. The royal and topgallant yards and topgallant masts had to be sent down, although at the time it was work of great danger, for the masts were shaking like coach whips, so that it was extremely difficult for the people to retain their hold aloft; however, Bligh, one of our mates, led the way to the fore royal-yard, and a fine youngster, a maintop-man, led up to the main royal-yard, both being followed by plenty of volunteers. The captain ascertained at once who had led the way up from the maintop, and on the youngster returning to the deck afterwards he rated him 'A.B.' on the spot. All our boats were now lowered and employed sounding for the deepest water, finding a sufficiency close to her in every direction but the inside, where the reef

was now visible only thirty yards off. The launch was got out, and as mate of her, I thought it my duty to be hoisted out in the boat, and a very unpleasant sensation it was, in consequence of the jerking of the masts and yards as the ship was striking. The coxswain and I had a narrow escape, for by some means or other, as soon as the boat reached the water, the purchase slipped from the mainyard and fell with its blocks right into her, just clearing us. After great labour we carried out the stream anchor, but the tide setting so strong along the shore prevented it being done in the best place; however, it went in deep water, and a strain was hove on it, but to no purpose.

“The ship was now striking heavily, and many a time did I think of my poor ‘Thetis,’ although hers was a worse case. Guns and shot were now hove overboard, and fortunately the wind came a little more off the shore, allowing us to make sail on the foremast to assist. Day now began to break and the fog to clear, in fact the heavens shone upon our labours in a brilliant morning, cheering every heart, and showing us our critical situation on a low, rocky coast, with high land at the back. The small bower anchor, with a hempen cable, was now taken out in my pretty launch, and although her beauty was not added to in the undertaking (she being much knocked about by the sea throwing her against the bows of the ship), it was admirably done. A heavy strain was then hove on this anchor, but also without effect. At half-past seven all hands went to breakfast, a meal being necessary to everybody, for although our worthy skipper had ordered the ‘mainbrace to be spliced’ during the night, the ship’s company were somewhat exhausted by the severe work.

“Just before eight, our chief, who remained on deck watching some little marks he had selected on shore, observed the ship moving off in the direction of her bower anchor. He called down the hatchway, ‘The ship is



"The rudder suddenly carried away . . . and the ship immediately broached to."

After a drawing by one of the Officers.

moving! hands up to capstan and purchases!’ an announcement responded to by a cheer from everybody. As we hove she moved off quite half a length, and there hung, but the captain gave us orders to run the ship’s company right aft and then forward again, when she slipped off into deep water.

“We got our boats up, and, having cut away both cables, made sail for a little place called ‘Wolf’s Cove,’ where we anchored in ten fathoms, and furled sails. The ship has damaged herself badly, and is making close on two feet of water in the hour; main and mizzen masts are badly sprung, but we have excellent pumps and a fine ship’s company. We started on our homeward journey this morning, and are now clear of the straits.”

The next entry in my father’s journal is dated October 4th; the heavy weather, hard work, and trying times having in all probability prevented him from making use of his pen in the interval.

On Sunday, September 27th, the ship having run over a thousand miles on her course before strong westerly breezes, the rudder suddenly carried away at three o’clock in the afternoon, and the ship immediately broached to. A ship was in sight, hull down, to the southward when this untoward accident occurred; signal guns were therefore fired and signals of distress made, in the hope of attracting her attention, but without avail.

A heavy gale lasting thirty hours succeeded, during which, after infinite labour, a temporary rudder, called the “Grafton rudder,”* was suspended over the stern like a steering-oar, and the ship’s head was got to the eastward. In the meantime a “Pakenham”† rudder was constructed and

* So named from having been first used on board an Indiaman of that name, who lost her rudder on the way home from the Cape.

† For the benefit of non-nautical readers I may state that this rudder is constructed from the spare spars which a ship carries. A long one comes next to the ship’s sternpost, and forms the neck of the rudder, a shorter one next to it, and then a shorter still, and so on, till the whole thing looks not unlike a gigantic “pan-pipes,” with the “pipes” close together. The heel of the rudder was kept in place by hawsers, which were led under the ship’s bottom her whole length, and brought in forward. It was these hawsers that chafed through in the “Pique,” owing to the jagged state of her bottom.

kept on deck ready to be shipped when the weather should moderate.

Even those unacquainted with nautical matters will appreciate to the full the desperate condition of the "Pique" at this time. Leaking at the rate of nearly two feet in the hour, rudderless, with her main and mizzen masts badly sprung, and so extensively damaged a bottom that none on board knew from one moment to another when the straining of the ship in the heavy seas might not cause her to founder, it was a struggle between skill in seamanship, energy and daring on the one side, and an almost hopeless condition of affairs on the other; and few events in the history of the Navy have brought out the sterling qualities of officers and men to a greater extent than does the story of this voyage of the "Pique." Sometimes the ship, having come up in the wind, could not be coaxed round on her course again for hours at a time. However, at last a brief interval of fine weather enabled the "Pakenham" rudder to be shipped.

The following extract from a letter which my father wrote to his parents on October 4th gives a good idea of their condition at this time:—

"*Sunday, October 4th.*—This, my beloved parents, is a sheet which I have separated from my journal, in which I have had neither time nor inclination to write for some days. To-day should be a day of rest, and, as far as we can, we are making it so, but our times are fraught with solemn circumstances. Here we are in mid-ocean, having escaped shipwreck in the first instance, and having run several hundred miles towards our native island without a rudder in the second, being, moreover, only prevented from foundering by our pumps. This morning the people were all mustered, after which we had Divine Service, and offered up our prayers for our safety. If it be the Almighty's pleasure to take us, He certainly has given us timely warning, and I hope our prayers may be heard.

"This may or may not reach you, my dear parents; if it should, it will show you what my feelings are under these

most trying circumstances. One of our pumps has shown signs of weakness, but I believe we shall get it right; its loss would be serious. I am writing in the dispensary, as our own berth is thoroughly saturated with wet. The shaking the poor ship got on the rocks has left hardly any pitch in the seams of the decks, and the water from the pumps pours in as through a basket."

"*Monday, October 5th.*—Since writing to you yesterday we have neared England by a hundred miles. It blew very hard all last night, with rain, but appears now to be clearing; the wind, however, has come more to the eastward, and therefore prevents our making a direct course for England; still, we are nearing it a little day by day. I am still writing in the dispensary for the same reasons as before. We sit at dinner in oilskin trousers and tarpaulin hats to keep the drops off our heads. We passed two English brigs this morning going to the westward.

"You will all, I dare say, understand that our case is a critical one, when I tell you that our boats are ready, and provisions kept in them in case of foundering. I fear, however, that this would be but a poor remedy in the sea now running. One of our quarter-boats we lost some days since, the gig astern is stove, and the night before last a sea nearly ruined the other quarter-boat. The leak remains at twenty inches per hour, which is pumped out by Massey's beautiful pumps in between twenty and twenty-five minutes, the fellows singing as they work the winches. We have many fathoms of our six-inch hemp cable towing astern, having several heavy weights attached to the end of it, a spare topsail-yard is lashed across the ship's stern, from the ends of which steering lines are secured to the end of the cable near the weights. The boys and junior officers man the cross-jackyard braces, by trimming which, and hauling on the cable tackles, the ship is kept on her course.

"Since our leaving Labrador, till this morning, we have

only fallen in with three small brigs; to all we showed signals of distress, wishing to put our passengers on board. Two came to us; one, however, was in a leaky, bad state, and the other had 180 fishermen on board returning from Labrador; she, however, assisted us very pluckily in getting our head towards Europe.* It was a somewhat hazardous operation; she took a hawser to check our bow round, but as soon as we got before the wind and sea we ran rapidly, requiring skill and courage on the part of the little brig to help us without endangering herself; whilst, on our part, the quick handling and disposition of the canvas was all we could do. It was arranged that Captain Hastings Doyle,† Lord Aylmer's military secretary, should visit the brig to examine her accommodation for passengers,‡ and it was with no slight difficulty that Doyle succeeded in getting into and out of the boat, for we were at the time rolling our gangways down. He is a fine fellow, and takes his turn at the pumps with the others, as he says, 'to get an appetite for dinner.' The men like him, and the song at the winches is always a merry one when he is there. On getting on board again from the brig, he confided to me laughingly that 'he had never been in such a funk in all his life!' The brig was laden with fish, smelling horribly, was leaking not a little, and had no accommodation of any sort for passengers; Lady Aylmer, therefore, to her great joy, I verily believe, remains with us."

The letter here concludes, and, under date of Wednesday, October 7th, I find an entry again in the pages of the journal, as follows:—

"Yesterday the weather became perfectly fine, enabling

* This was the French brig "Suffren," whose gallant captain was afterwards thanked by the British Government for his aid to the "Pique."

† Afterwards Sir Hastings Doyle.

‡ It should be mentioned that Lady Aylmer would not hear of the suggestion that she and her maid, at all events, should take passage with the Frenchman; this noble-hearted woman preferring to remain with her shipmates, to share their dangers, and encourage them as much as possible.

us to ship our jury rudder, which we did by noon, and a little before 4 p.m. the first man went to the wheel, and to our great joy we found we could steer the ship with it. The song at the pumps immediately changed to a more cheery note, the chorus of which is :

‘ Three cheers for good old England, boys !
To-day we ’ve shipped a rudder.’

“ No sooner was the rudder all right than the wind headed us, therefore we have rather increased our distance than otherwise, being by computation 430 miles from Scilly. This is not so bad, however, as we have run without a rudder at all (except the ‘ Grafton,’ which wasn’t much good) nearly 1000 miles.

“ The leak has decreased an inch in the hour, owing to one of the bad places forward being stopped with tallow and other material. As she rises in the swell one can see that her forefoot is entirely gone, and consequently she must be very materially injured.

“ The weather has become beautifully fine and clear, and I dare say we shall soon get a fair wind again. We have had a sail ‘ thrummed’* to put under her if wanted, but I trust there will be no occasion for it, as it will surely stop her way through the water a good deal. I have just had the pleasing gratification of being presented with a nicely made straw hat by one of the men, because I used my little interest with the captain to get him a higher rating. Poor fellow ! he appears very grateful, and said, ‘ Mr. Mends, you have done me and my family great good, sir, and I should like to make you a present of a hat.’ This is a great pleasure to me.

“ As I have told you before, we have three of Massey’s very fine pumps, which we work every hour to free the

* “ Thrumming ” a sail consists of working rope through it so as to make it like a coarse mat. When placed round a ship’s damaged bottom the pressure of the water drives it inwards and helps to stop the leaks.

ship. The men have christened these—the largest is called the ‘Red Rover,’ the second is called the ‘Exquisite,’ because it got out of repair, and, baffling the carpenters, was put in order by three bluejackets, who remained working at it all one night; the last is a small pump, and called the ‘Omnibus,’ because everybody takes a turn at it, officers, passengers and men indiscriminately. The instant the watch is piped to the pumps the men get to work at them with much joking, and generally commence a song, to the time of which they heave round the winch, making the motion as regular as if by steam, without jerking or straining the machinery. These pumps certainly answer to admiration, throwing up a very large body of water in a comparatively short time. For instance, we allow nearly three feet to get into her, and then pump it out, with all three pumps going, in a little more than ten minutes, which I am sure will be acknowledged good.

“Yesterday I dined with the captain and his passengers, who have had, poor people, to rough it like ourselves. It was the first ‘cabin’ party since our thumping the rocks, even then I was the only visitor; but to-day I am happy to say there has been another little party, showing that a little more confidence and pleasure reigns in the mind of our good captain. To-day we have cleared our decks and put things to rights, and, what is more, a short time since we ‘wore ship,’ and are now laying only two or three points off our course.”

“*Thursday, October 8th, 6 p.m.*—To-day a fine breeze has sprung up from the westward, enabling us to make head for our port at the rate of seven and eight miles an hour. To-day at noon we were 366 miles from Scilly, and I trust that by this time to-morrow we shall only be 200. We ought, indeed, to be grateful, for our bad luck seems to me to have changed, running as we did nearly 1000 miles without a rudder; the weather then falls calm, and a fine

day enables us to ship one with which we can now safely approach the land, and not many hours after, a fine, fair wind gets up again. The pumps go round to a much more cheerful song since this favouring breeze sprang up."

"*Friday, October 9th, 3 p.m.*—During the last twenty-four hours we have neared Scilly 180 miles, the breeze still continuing fresh and fair, and the ship going between nine and ten miles an hour. The leak has increased a little more from the rolling of the ship, but I trust to-morrow will see us well into the Channel. At present I understand that Portsmouth is our destined port, provided nothing further happens to us. What has already taken place will, I have little doubt, be pulled to pieces in the papers, but for those who befriend the build [*i.e.*, the 'Symondite' ships, see note on p. 33] it is a great triumph."

"*Tuesday, October 13th, 5 a.m., St. Helens.*—We have just anchored. Since last writing we have had a heavy gale in the 'chops' of the Channel, during which we lost our good friend the 'jury' rudder; we picked up the Caskets light, and had to anchor (to avoid going on them) with a hemp cable, all our remaining ground tackle, in forty-five fathoms. Whilst there a small passenger steamer spoke us on her way to Jersey, and by her a message was sent asking for the aid of a tug; however, that night the wind veered to the north-west, and the night being fine the anchor was weighed and we made our way to the northward, soon making the Portland lights, then St. Catharine's, and, finally, the dear old Nab. On anchoring, our chaplain, Fielding, who is also the coxswain of our racing gig, offered up thanks under the half-deck for our safety. Our noble chief ordered the 'main-brace to be spliced,' and we all assembled in the cabin to congratulate each other on our providential arrival."

By daylight the ship's number was made out by the "Victory," and her condition explained by signal. About 10 a.m. the admiral's tender and dockyard lighters were

seen coming out. The flag-lieutenant, Eden, a one-armed officer, was the bearer of orders for Captain Rous, and he also brought my father the joyful intelligence that he was promoted, and that he had been a lieutenant since the previous August. By the afternoon of Wednesday, October 14th, the ship was safely in Portsmouth dockyard. As she passed Point on the way in, towed by the little passenger steamer "Brunswick," the pumps were at full work, the water streaming from the scuppers, and the shore was lined with spectators who gave her hearty cheers. When taken into dock the condition of the ship's bottom was such that she had to be hung in the shores as the water left the dock.

The whole of the exterior of the main keel, most of the stemson, and sternpost were gone, and many of the timbers so rubbed away that very little more must have led to her foundering; happily the sides of the main keel inboard in this ship* had been filled with oak, bolted and caulked, or she would certainly have left her bones on the rocky coast of Labrador.

Before following my father's fortunes in his next ship, I may add that Captain Rous and Mr. William Hemsley, the master, were tried by court-martial for stranding the ship, and honourably and fully acquitted. Orders were received for the ship to pay off, when the following letter was read to the ship's company by the captain:—

" 'BRITANNIA,' PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR,
'November 3rd, 1835.

"SIR,—On the paying off of the 'Pique, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty are desirous of expressing their approbation of the conduct of yourself and the officers and crew under your command, in extricating the 'Pique' from the perilous situation she was in when on shore on the coast of Labrador, and on her subsequent voyage home under circumstances of great difficulty, and such as required skill and exertions of no ordinary kind; and you will therefore receive, and communicate, their Lordships' sentiments to the officers and crew of His Majesty's ship 'Pique' under your command.

"Sir, your humble servant,

"THOMAS WILLIAMS, *Admiral*.

"TO CAPTAIN H. J. ROUS, R.N."

* See note on page 33, and Mr. Froude's remark as to special construction of "Pique's" bottom.

CHAPTER VII

1835-1843

AFTER a few weeks of leave he received an appointment in December as junior lieutenant of the "Vernon," with orders to join her at Malta. He sailed from Falmouth towards the end of the month in the mail steamer "Hermes," a novel experience for him. There was a merry and agreeable party on board, amongst whom was a naval lieutenant, Giffard, who, like himself, was on his way to join a ship in the Mediterranean, and at Gibraltar the American commodore, Hull, and his daughter joined the party.

Hull had been captain of the U.S. frigate "Constitution," 44 guns, which had engaged and captured the British frigate "Guerrière," 38, Captain James Richard Dacres, after a hard-fought action, in 1812. Captain Dacres was at this time (1835) in command of the "Edinburgh," 74, one of a considerable fleet lying at Malta, and on the arrival of the "Hermes" he received his old antagonist with all honour, placing his barge and galley at the American commodore's disposal during his stay.

The "Vernon" was at Malta, and my father joined her at the end of December, 1835. She was an experimental 50-gun frigate, a "Symondite," one of the finest specimens of her type, outsailing and beating in her day every ship that competed with her. Her captain was John McKerlie, a veteran of the old war, who had served in the "Arethusa" with Captain Sir Edward Pellew in 1794, and who, following that distinguished officer through a great part of his career, had lost his right arm in the action between the two frigates "Indefatigable" and "Amazon" and the French seventy-four, "Les Droits de l'Homme."

Keen was the interest evinced by naval men of that day in the Symondites, for they represented a comparatively new and important departure in construction and lines. Few

indeed were those who could look into the future and foresee the revolution that steam was about to produce in naval affairs. These were the last few years of the sailing frigate, a class of vessel which has borne no mean share in making the empire what it is to-day. The most intense interest centred round their performances under sail. They were the "greyhounds" of the period; and the "Vernon" was constantly employed in trying rate of sailing against the other frigates on the station. In those days most new things were received in the navy with doubt and disfavour, partly owing to the intrinsic conservatism which was a marked characteristic of the service, and partly to the more logical reason that, to the minds of the untheoretical and intensely practical seamen of that day, old systems which had been tried and not found wanting appeared to be infinitely preferable to new-fangled methods, which might prove faithless in the hour of need. Thus chain cables found no favour with the old school when they first came to supersede hemp; gunsights too, when first introduced, were not exactly received with enthusiasm, and I well remember a story which my father used to tell of an old gunner's mate who was overheard to say, that "For his part he'd put the d——d things *into* the guns the first time they found themselves alongside an enemy!"

To this rule the "Symondites" were no exception, and looking back, one can well imagine the heated arguments and debates which went on amongst officers and men alike, as to why this or that ship had "weathered" or "forereached" during the day's sailing.

Treasured amongst my father's papers are the words of an old song, composed by Captain Gray, who commanded the detachment of Royal Marines serving in the "Vernon" at this period. The ship's motto, *Vernon semper viret*, in a parodied form, is introduced into the refrain, and as a few verses of the song may help to take the reader back to the days in which it was written, I give them here, making no apology for the old sailor's rhyme or metre.

I.

"Much has been written, said, and sung,
To prove this ship a failure;
From purblind prejudice it sprung,
For trust me, she can sail, sir!

Whilst donkeys* bend to every breeze,
 And Johnny-raws† they stare up,
 With grace and ease she stems the seas,—
 Vernon semper flare up!
 Flare up, flare up, Vernon semper flare up!

II.

"Whilst others dread the coming gale
 And hate to hear it howling,
 Away she flies, through troubled skies,
 Ten knots upon a bowline.
 Harder and harder still it blows,
 And see, the fleet they bear up,
 Whilst like a strong man forth she goes,—
 Vernon semper flare up!
 Flare up, flare up, Vernon semper flare up!
 Through clouds of spray she cleaves her way,—
 Vernon semper flare up!

III.

"Off Cape Colonne, or thereabout,
 A south-west wind prevailing,
 The admiral threw the signal out
 To try the rate of sailing.
 The 'Vernon,' 'Portland,' 'Columbine,'
 All hoist their sails with care up,
 And quickly o'er the dark blue brine
 They made a mighty flare up.
 Flare up, flare up, Vernon semper flare up!
 While a rainbow ray beamed in each spray,
 Made by this mighty flare up.

IV.

"The 'Endymion's' bows were quickly passed,
 And, though we bore her no spite,
 Old Boreas, in a surly blast,
 He badly sprung her bowsprit;
 The 'Portland' too, her topmast sprung,
 No longer kept the wind, sir,
 While to the breeze the 'Vernon' clung,
 And the cripples left behind, sir.
 Behind, sir, behind, sir, swift as the passing wind, sir!
 Like clouds that fly o'er winter's sky,
 The cripples left behind, sir.

V.

"What of the 'Columbine' meanwhile,
 In all this grand to-do, sir?
 In running round St. George's isle,
 Her foreyard went in two, sir.
 The fleet held on for Salamis,
 The wind still blowing fair, sir,
 And 'Vernon' was the first, I wis,
 To drop her anchor there, sir!
 There, sir, there, sir, to drop her anchor there, sir.
 That day in speed she did a deed
 That made old sailors stare, sir.

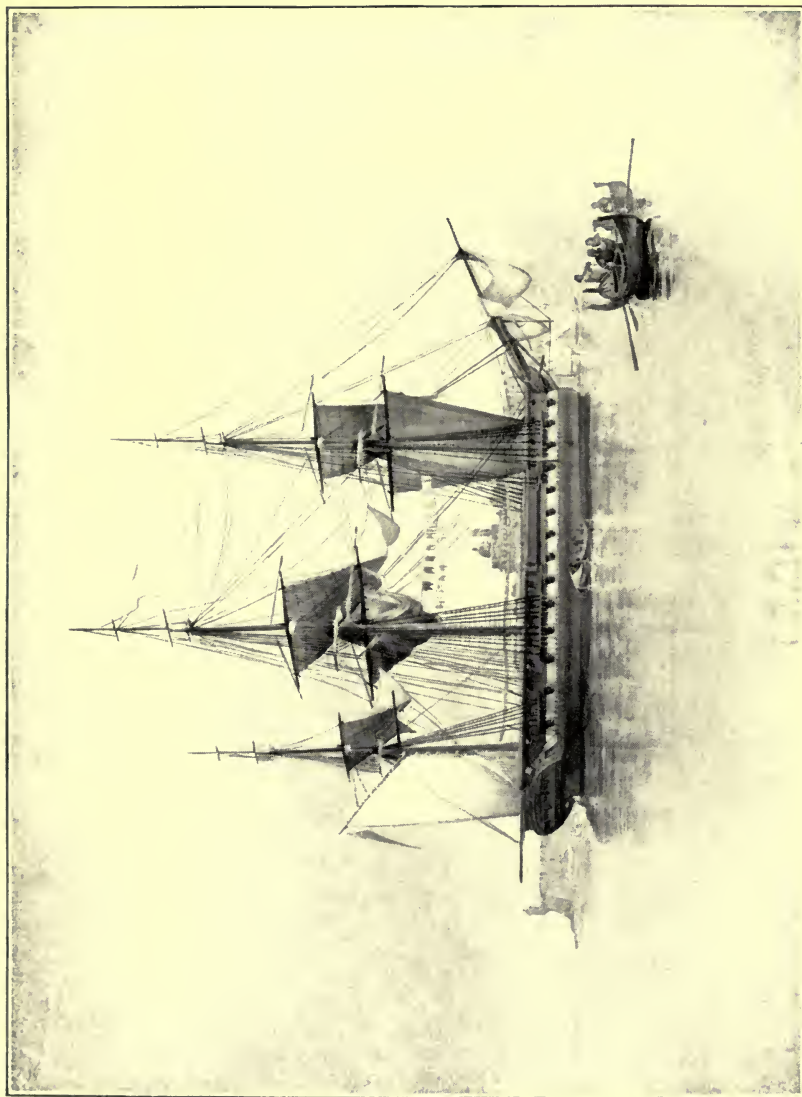
VI.

"Thus ends my log; a glass of grog
 To Symonds her projector,
 Bred in the school of common sense,
 And not of architecture.
 Now let us sing 'God save the King,'
 And success to the 'Vernon,'
 In lightest breeze or stormy seas
 A rival she can fear none;
 Nought floats around seas' utmost bound
 To match the flying 'Vernon.'"

Alas! however, for this old-time pride of the Mediterranean, her reign, though brilliant, was somewhat brief, for at the end of the year 1836 she was found to be infected with dry-rot, and the beautiful frigate was placed under orders for home.

In the meantime, however, interests other than those of the service had been at work with my father; he had fallen in love, at Malta, with the lady who was soon to become his wife. He applied at once to the admiral for a fresh appointment on the station, and, on the "Vernon's" departure, was transferred, as supernumerary lieutenant, to the "Caledonia," 120, flying the flag of Admiral Sir Josias Rowley. He did not, however, remain long in her, for at the end of six weeks Captain Hyde Parker, of the "Rodney," 90, who had always befriended him since the days of the "Thetis" court-martial, hearing that his services were available, applied for him to fill a vacancy in his own ship.

The "Rodney" was one of the best-disciplined ships in the service of that day; it was considered a distinction to



H.M.S. "VERNON."

From a painting by Captain George Pechell Mends, R.N.

TO THE
LIBRARY OF
CALIFORNIA

belong to her, for she was looked up to by the whole fleet as a model of what a ship of war should be.

In March, 1837, he accordingly took passage from Malta in the "Childers," 18, Commander the Hon. Henry Keppel,* to join his new ship at Barcelona, but not, however, until he had proposed to, and been accepted by, his future wife.

In due course of time the "Rodney" returned to Malta, and on December 6th, 1837, he married, in Valetta, Melita Stilon, daughter of Dr. Stilon, M.D., who in earlier life had been for some years in the Royal Navy, and whose history is of sufficient interest to warrant my giving a brief outline of it here.

Dr. Stilon was of Italian parentage and noble birth, his mother having been a Colonna, and he was born in 1785 at Monteleone, Calabria. The family owned considerable estates near Reggio, where their descendants still live. In the terrible days of the Inquisition, when neither life nor property were secure in Italy, a fearful calamity had overtaken the family. His father was suddenly arrested, whilst sitting at breakfast with his wife and children, and was hurried away without warning or trial, and without even knowing the nature of the charge brought against him, to a prison, from which no tidings nor even rumour of him ever again reached his bereaved wife or relatives until some years after his death. Ten years later his widow was informed that he had been dead for some years. She had all the time been sending money, food, and little luxuries for his benefit, all of which found their way, no doubt, into the hands of crafty gaolers. How he died, when he died, whether he underwent physical torture or not, has never been known.

Such was the Italy of that day, though it is hard for us to realize that but little more than a hundred years ago such things occurred in Europe.

It became necessary for young Stilon to earn his living, and he elected to do so by the practice of medicine, for which he had an aptitude; so he accordingly studied at Naples, took his degree, and practised for some time in Calabria, in the vicinity of his home.

During the time when Murat was King of Naples southern Italy was overrun by French troops, and the Neapolitan

* The well-known Admiral of the Fleet.

Court retired to Palermo, whence, aided by a squadron, an expeditionary force was dispatched under General Stuart to attack them. At the battle of Maida, fought on July 4th, 1806, where a superior French force under General Regnier was defeated, young Dr. Stilon, who had been pressed into the French service by the French commander (who was short of medical officers), was taken prisoner by the British, and in due course was sent, with many others, to England, where he was drafted to Forton, near Gosport. He was released on parole, and for some time did medical duty amongst the prisoners, the supervision of which rested with Sir William Burnett, who was then at the head of the medical department of the Navy.

Sir William Burnett was struck with the professional skill and ability of the young Italian surgeon, and persuaded him to enter the naval medical service of England, which he was not averse to do, seeing that not only had his family and professional prospects in his own country been blasted by the course of political events there, but he had formed an attachment for a young lady, the widow of a naval officer, who, with her two children, resided with her uncle, the governor of Forton prison. In due course the young couple were married, and after serving in several ships, Dr. Stilon was appointed as surgeon to Malta dockyard, with a house on the sheer bastion, and there my mother was born.

After serving for some years in this appointment, and also at the Malta naval hospital, Dr. Stilon retired from the service and entered into private practice in Valetta, where he resided, a well-known figure, much beloved and respected by all, till his death in 1848.

As the "Rodney" was undergoing a slight refit, my father was able to get a few weeks' leave of absence for his marriage and honeymoon. Captain Hyde Parker accorded him his fullest sympathy in this matter of his marriage, and strict disciplinarian though he was, he gave the bride and her sister Kate a passage in the ship to Naples in the spring of 1838, a most enjoyable trip for the ladies, neither of whom had ever left Malta before.

In July, 1838, Sir John Louis, Admiral Superintendent of Malta dockyard, offered him the appointment of flag-lieutenant, and acting on Hyde Parker's advice he accepted

it. The appointment carried with it the charge of the receiving-ship "Ceylon," through which many officers and men passed annually, and this gave him the opportunity of acquiring a knowledge of both which was extremely useful to him in after life. Some of the worst characters in the service passed through the "Ceylon," either on their way to prison, or whilst awaiting court-martial, or on their way home; and it required strict discipline, as well as prompt action on the part of the commanding officer, to prevent open mutiny at times, and to maintain order amongst the nondescript collection of men that were occasionally drafted on board.

Much of his spare time at this period was taken up with the study of steam and marine engineering, in which he took the keenest interest, foreseeing, as all true seamen should have, the vast importance of the changes its introduction into the service was bound to produce in course of time. He also studied Italian and chemistry under his father-in-law's tuition.

In January, 1840, Sir John Louis temporarily relieved Sir Robert Stopford, the commander-in-chief, taking his place in command of the fleet in the Archipelago for six months. Sir Robert Stopford had obtained the sanction of the Admiralty to this arrangement in order that he might return to Malta for a time, partly for the benefit of his health, and partly to settle a dispute which had arisen with the Neapolitan government concerning the export of sulphur from Sicily.

The British fleet lay at Vourla when Sir John Louis took over the temporary command, my father, of course, as flag-lieutenant, accompanying him. At Vourla also was lying a large French fleet. The times were somewhat critical, the great question then pending being the rebellion of Mahomet Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, against the Sultan. The British policy was to support the Sultan; France, on the other hand, pursuing a somewhat similar course to that which she had adopted in 1832, was inclined to assist Mahomet Ali. The question was rapidly assuming an acute phase, owing to the threatened attack by the Egyptian troops on the Turkish positions in Syria. An almost overwhelming French force lay with ours in Vourla Bay under Admiral Lalande, commander-in-chief, with his flag flying in the

90-gun ship "Jena" and a rear-admiral in the 110-gun ship "Montebello."

At the critical moment Austria threw in her lot with England, and this caused Louis Philippe to change both his policy and his minister, Guizot replacing Thiers, and the French fleet being recalled home. Shortly after Sir Robert Stopford resumed the command of the British fleet, and the Syrian war took place.

As regards the part played by my father in these events, a certain ill-fortune seems to have befallen him at this period. At the termination of Sir John Louis' six months' command afloat he thought he would become entitled to a "hauling down" promotion for his flag-lieutenant, of which he therefore held out a promise to my father. Accordingly, when, on returning to Malta, two captains of ships going to the coast of Syria offered him first-lieutenancies, they and several other old officers whom he had consulted, on hearing what Sir John Louis had said about this "hauling down" vacancy, advised him to remain where he was. He thus missed participating in the bombardment of Acre, and took no part in the other operations on the coast of Syria, which might have led to rapid promotion, for, on returning to England with Sir John Louis in the "Stromboli" in June, 1843, the latter was informed by the Admiralty that his request for the promotion of his flag-lieutenant could not be granted. Whether Sir John Louis, in applying in the first place for the advancement of his son (who was in command of the "Stromboli") from commander to post-rank, asked for too much, or whatever the cause was, certain it is that neither promotion was granted, although the following letters, written afterwards, show that he made some attempt to fulfil his promise, though rather late in the day:—

"BAGNI DI LUCIA,

"*August 30th, 1843.*

"MY DEAR MENDES,—You would have heard from me long ere this, but, by some unaccountable blunder, the Admiralty letter, in reply to that which I addressed to the Board before I left England, only reached me two days since. I now forward you a copy, on the other side, of a letter I have written to their Lordships soliciting your promotion, and I shall sincerely rejoice if it has the desired effect, for the satisfactory manner in which you discharged

your duties during the time you were with me entitles you to my best services, and I think you ought to have been satisfied that no exertions that were compatible with the primary duty which, in my judgment, I owed my son would be spared on my part to secure an object so desirable to you and to me also.

"I beg you will offer my kind regards to your father, and tell him that his letter was put into my hands at the very moment I was starting from London, which will account for my not having acknowledged it, and I have not since done so for the same reason which has kept me from writing to you. This letter will, I hope, be accepted as a reply to his.

"Believe me, my dear Mends,

"Very sincerely yours,

"JOHN LOUIS."

Copy of Sir John Louis' letter to the Admiralty :—

"SIR,—In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of the 17th July, forwarded to me at this place, in which letter you inform me that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty cannot comply with my request for the promotion of my son to the rank of captain, I have to request that you will be pleased to lay before their Lordships the expression of my earnest hope that, although they cannot grant me the favour I have solicited, they will not deny me the promotion of my flag-lieutenant on the occasion of my striking my flag as Rear-Admiral Superintendent of Malta dockyard—Admiral Warren having, I am informed, obtained the promotion of his flag-lieutenant on a similar occasion, I hope their Lordships will not withhold from me the same privilege.

"Lieutenant W. R. Mends served as my flag-lieutenant from the 28th July, 1838, to the 15th July, 1843, the date of my striking my flag, during the whole of which period he conducted himself to my entire satisfaction, and I can strongly recommend him as a zealous and deserving officer, fully justifying the high character I received of him from Admiral Hyde Parker, then in command of the "Rodney," from which ship he joined my flag.

"I have the honour to be,

"etc., etc.

"THE HON. SIDNEY HERBERT, M.P., etc."

During Sir John Louis' temporary command of the fleet his flag had flown first in the "Benbow," 74, Captain Houston Stewart, for three months, then in the "Ganges," 84, Captain

Barrington Reynolds, and on leaving the "Ganges," consequent on the return of Sir Robert Stopford, the flag was transferred to the "Hydra," Captain Spencer Robinson,* who impressed my father as being a most accomplished, far-seeing, and shrewd man, and who in conversation with him at this period said, "Mends, you will live to see mastless ships."

The following letter from Admiral Hyde Parker, in answer to one from my father congratulating him on his advancement to flag rank, is of interest:—

"FLORENCE,

"January 11th, 1842.

"MY DEAR MENDS,—Many thanks for your congratulations on my promotion, which has come at last. I am very much better in health this year than the last. I have written to Sir David Dunn to discharge Hyde, as I am going to accept an offer from my friend, Rear-Admiral Percy, to take him with him to the Cape, and, as Hyde's time is getting on, it will, I hope, be a good thing for him. I am glad to say that I hear good accounts of him from his captain. Before I received your letter I was in hopes you were already promoted, for I saw a Lieutenant Mends promoted to commander,† which I concluded was you, and am very sorry to find it is not the case, but I hope sincerely you will get it when Sir John Louis' time is out. Pray remember me most kindly to him, and Mrs. Parker desires to unite with me in kind remembrances to Lady Louis. You seem, by all accounts I hear, to have had a most unpopular commander-in-chief in Sir ——. He appears to have taken a delight in annoying everybody. How very ridiculous his constantly sending ships outside the lighthouse with sealed orders.

"Pray remember me to my friend McArthur; tell him I will write to him shortly. How gets on the 'Rodney?' I hope she keeps up her old place, but from what I hear, fear there is a very great want of discipline in the fleet. Pray remember me very kindly to Mrs. Mends.

"I am always,

"Yours most sincerely,

"HYDE PARKER."

The "Stromboli" reached England in June, 1843, and though sorely disappointed in not getting the expected promotion, my father immediately set about trying to obtain

* Afterwards Sir Spencer Robinson and Controller of the Navy.

† My father's first cousin, George Clarke Mends, a son of Sir Robert Mends, promoted November 23rd, 1841.

a first-lieutenancy. Nothing, however, presented itself for some time, and my mother having come to England,* a few pleasant weeks of leave were enjoyed. He wrote to his old tutor in steam at Malta at this time, and got the following reply, which is of some interest.

“MALTA,

“September 15th, 1843.

“MY DEAR MENDS,—I can only say a few words at this time. I have enclosed you a certificate for the whole time you were flag-lieutenant, and have framed it in the way I thought would best answer your purpose.

“As you have been so shamefully put past promotion, I think you are quite right in trying for a packet. You have the good wishes of all here, and there is but one feeling towards Sir John Louis.

“Your description of the ‘Great Briton’ is quite encouraging; there are very few sanguine minds of that vessel, but from the steady course they have pursued I think and hope they will succeed, and if they do she will be a prodigy indeed.

“With regard to myself I am happy to say that Sir Lucius (Curtis) and I go on very well together; I enjoy his perfect confidence. He has applied for an allowance of stationery for me, and is going to give me a second boat which Mr. Harvey will have to build. Sir Lucius allows no person to interfere in my department.

“Believe me, my dear friend,

“To be yours faithfully,

“J. HAMSHAW.”

An arrangement was made that he should go with Captain the Hon. Edward Plunkett† when the latter should take command of the “Stromboli,” but in the interval he went down to Haslar to see his younger brother Robert, who was ill in the hospital there, and he took the opportunity of calling on his late captain and staunch friend, Hyde Parker, then Admiral-Superintendent of Portsmouth dockyard. Hyde Parker strongly recommended him to go as first lieutenant with Sir Henry Blackwood, who was fitting out the frigate “Fox” at Portsmouth for the East Indies, thinking it a

* He had obtained a passage home for my mother and the little girl in H.M.S. “Rhadamanthus,” a paddle ship of war, and on the passage she was nearly lost in very heavy weather off Ushant, owing to a breakdown in her machinery.

† Afterwards Lord Dunsany.

much better service for him than the "Stromboli." Armed with a letter of introduction from Hyde Parker, my father at once called upon Sir Henry, and, in the course of a very pleasant interview, learnt that he (Sir Henry) would have been delighted to have had him with him in the "Fox" had not the appointment already been promised to a Lieutenant Morrett. My father returned to London, and on the next morning paid a visit to the Admiralty, where he met his old fellow-passenger in the "Hermes," now Captain Giffard, with whom he had a chat about the "Stromboli" and Plunkett. "Oh!" said Giffard, "there is something better for you, there is the 'Fox,' Sir Henry Blackwood, at Portsmouth, in want of a first lieutenant"; and my father replied that he had but just come up from her and that Lieutenant Morrett was nominated for her. "Yes," said Giffard, "so he was, but he has broken his leg riding with his brother, and cannot go." "Then," said my father, "I am the man, as Sir Henry Blackwood told me yesterday that if anything prevented Morrett from coming he would gladly have me."

Without losing a moment my father went down to the City, taking his wife with him, to get his outfit, and on returning to his lodgings later in the day he found a note awaiting him from Sir George Seymour's private secretary, directing him to come down to the Admiralty at once. Off he went, and on reaching Whitehall found that Sir George, who had gone to a meet, had left a blank commission to the "Fox," to be filled in in his name if he wished it. This point was soon settled, and on the following day, November 3rd, 1843, he joined her at Portsmouth, and was soon in the thick of work fitting out.



LIEUTENANT W. R. MENDES.

*From a portrait painted in 1842
by F. Green, Esq.*

CHAPTER VIII

1843-1847

THE "Fox" was an old-fashioned, somewhat ill-fitted ship; she was on the stocks when my father was at the naval college, and her figure-head, a huntsman, had impressed itself upon his boyish memory. For some reason or other she had never been put in commission, consequently many of her fittings were very old-fashioned and out of date.*

She fitted out against the "Iris," a ship that had just returned from foreign service, and was recommissioning with the same officers, Rodney Mundy being her captain. Greatly to the credit of the "Fox," and, parenthetically, to her energetic first lieutenant, the ships left Spithead together, and together encountered a heavy westerly gale, during which they bore up for Dungeness; the "Iris" afterwards returning to St. Helens, whilst the "Fox" proceeded to the Shannon and anchored off Tarbert, it having been decided to place Sir Henry Blackwood as senior officer on the west coast of Ireland during the troubles anticipated from the O'Connell riots. The west of Ireland was in a very disturbed state, and Sir Henry had several small craft placed under his orders, the government, no doubt, wishing to have an adequate force on the spot in case of possible eventualities.

The whole of the winter of 1843-44 was spent in Ireland, and here my mother and their little daughter came to pay him a visit, staying at Limerick and Tarbert. The proverbial hospitality of the Irish gentry was exercised to the full, so that in spite of almost continuous rain and much bad weather, the winter and spring appeared to have passed very pleasantly.

* The writer remembers her well in later years doing duty as transport and store ship, having had engines fitted to her. She had a peculiarly ugly, straight stern.

On May 12th, 1844, Sir Henry Blackwood became senior officer in Ireland; but, soon after, Sir Hugh Pigott was appointed to succeed Admiral Bowles in command at Cork, and on June 9th the ship received orders to proceed to Plymouth to refit for her original station, the East Indies.

On July 6th, 1844, she slipped from the buoy in Plymouth Sound, and after an uneventful passage, during which she touched at Tangier and Madeira, dropped anchor at Rio on August 27th, where she found H.M. ships "America" and "Alfred." Thence she proceeded to the Cape of Good Hope, and on Wednesday, September 25th, Simon's Bay was reached, where were found H.M. ships "Winchester," flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Percy, "Cleopatra," "Britain," and "Thunderbolt." After a few days spent in port, during which she was inspected by the commander-in-chief, she sailed for Trincomalee, which was reached on Sunday, November 10th. In due course Commodore Chads, in the "Cambrian," left for England, and Sir Henry Blackwood hoisted the broad pennant. Save for one or two incidents the commission of the "Fox" was uneventful: my father became a firm friend of Sir Henry Blackwood's, and at the latter's request lived much with him.

The ordinary duties of a first lieutenant occupied him very fully, and his diary teems with entries concerning the painting, refitting of masts and yards, and the internal economy of the ship; together also with many allusions to the time which it took to perform certain evolutions aloft, such as shifting topsails, etc. He devoted much of his spare time to reading, and joined a library at Bombay; he also made many friends amongst the people on shore, and whenever he got an opportunity took as much part as he could in such festivities as dinner parties, dances, picnics, etc., of which the hospitable Anglo-Indians are so fond.

The ship had not been long on the station before the British seaman's love for pets asserted itself. Amongst those kept on board the "Fox" was a lion cub, picked up when she visited the east coast of Africa. In due course the cub grew, as cubs will, and became a respectable-sized lion, the object of considerable distrust to strangers visiting the ship, but unfeared by the ship's company, who had fondled him as a kitten. Coming on deck one day, my father found one of the men holding him firmly by the

mane with one hand, and giving him a sound thrashing with a rope's end with the other, his offence being the theft of some chickens. When lying at Bombay, on one occasion, this same lion became attracted by the horses and people on shore, his instinct for fresh meat was aroused, and without warning he slipped over the side and started swimming. Quick as thought the quartermaster jumped into the dinghy and went in pursuit, and then ensued an exciting chase, the lion being eventually overtaken and hauled by main force, deeply unwilling, into the stern-sheets of the little boat, and rowed back in triumph to the ship. One can picture the scene: the burly, red-faced, somewhat out-of-breath blue-jacket bending to his oars, whilst the sullen, half-defiant lion, with unassuaged appetite gleaming in his eye, sat, somewhat bedraggled and thoroughly cowed by his jovial captor, in the stern of the boat.

But the animal which, perhaps, added most to the entertainment and joy of all on board was a baby elephant named "Trinco," a gift to the commodore. Master Trinco, after the manner of his kind, displayed an almost human intelligence. Having misbehaved himself by taking shot out of the racks and leaving them to roll about the maindeck, to the great detriment of the paintwork and the bare feet of the unwary, he was confined in a rope pen between the bitts, which for a day or so proved effectual in restraining his antics. His fertile brain, however, was not long in devising a method of escape, and for the whole of one day and night he lounged his great weight against the side of his rope prison, with the result that the ropes stretched sufficiently to enable him to lift the middle one and effect his escape. He was an unforgiving little elephant, too, for, having been defeated in an attempt to steal the gunroom potatoes as they were carried aft by the cook's mate and getting, instead of a potato, only a sharp prick in the trunk from that worthy's three-pronged fork, he bided his time, and squirted the youngster all over with a trunkful of the dirtiest water to be found on board.

Early in 1846 the ship was up the Persian Gulf, and here commenced a series of misfortunes, beginning with her stranding on Seir-Abou-Neir, which might have had a far more serious ending than it did. My father had had several more or less severe attacks of fever, from one of

which he was suffering at the time. I give the incident in his own words :—

“January 2nd.—At 2 a.m., feeling very ill and feverish, had to turn out the doctor, who put me on the sick list. Got up again at 4 a.m., and told Rundle,* whose morning watch it was, that I was ill. At 5 a.m. felt the ship strike the ground hard, and heard Rundle order the port bower anchor to be let go. Hurried up with the hands to furl sails, and saw a long line of surf just visible a short distance ahead. Got out boats and carried out kedge and stream anchors with hemp cables astern; got down lower-yards and top-masts; felt so ill, pain in my head so great, that I was unable to give any further assistance. As the tide left us, ship shored up with spare topmasts, and settled down on an uneven bottom of rock and sand. Started fifty tons of water out of our tanks, and lightened ship by sending fourteen 32-pounders and all carronades overboard.”

“January 3rd, 3 a.m.—Lying in bed I felt ship lively, and at four o'clock ship's company heaving on the cables, she began to thump with violence on her keel; rudder unshipped; let go stern cables and hove on the bow ones, when she ceased to thump instantly, and went off at once to the bower cable. A ship almost always will spring from the ground by the bow first, scarcely ever by the stern. Gave three cheers and piped to grog. Cleaned decks and rested ship's company; got rudder on board, and found all pintles gone.”

“January 4th.—Employed recovering guns and anchors, coiling cables, repairing rudder, striking forecastle guns on to the maindeck, and sending shot to ships in company,

* Lieutenant Rundle, second lieutenant of the “Fox,” had been specially promoted for distinguished gallantry at the capture of Aden in 1839, on which occasion he had the honour of planting the first British flag. He was the father of the present Major-General Sir H. M. Leslie Rundle, K.C.B., D.S.O., so distinguished for service in Egypt.

'Pilot' and 'Clive.' By 6 p.m. had recovered all but two guns, all anchors except the barge's, and all hawsers."

"January 5th.—Cleaning ship, re-stowing tiers, completing rudder, and examining the ship by divers. At 8 p.m. found the missing guns. Band played 'All's well'; squadron cheered us."

"January 6th.—4 p.m. weighed in company with squadron. Came out of the sick list. Found by the means of many lunars, taken at Seir-Abou-Neir, that the longitude of it is $54^{\circ} 7'$, being given by chart as $54^{\circ} 22'$."

The ship now returned to Bombay, which was reached on the 24th, and here they received the news of the severe fighting in the Punjaub against the Sikhs. The ship's company were turned over to a hulk called the "Balcarres," an old East Indiaman, whilst the "Fox" went into dry dock to undergo repairs. She was found to be much damaged, nearly the whole of her false keel gone, and eight feet of her sternpost. Cholera soon made its appearance amongst the men, and spread with such alarming rapidity that they were hastily moved to quarters on Butchers' Island. Here a canteen was established for beer, under the sign of the "Jolly Fox." Cricket and recreation were made the order of the day; the cholera disappeared as if by magic, and by the time the repairs to the ship were completed the ship's company were quite fit to return to her.

In August the ship visited the Seychelles, and in September was in Aden, where my father made the acquaintance of a Mr. Cruttenden, a lieutenant of the Indian Navy acting as Assistant Political Agent,* from whose society he derived much pleasure.

The place was threatened with an attack by the Arabs at the time, but it came to nothing, and on October 7th the ship left for Bombay. On November 2nd he was given the acting vacancy in command of the "Spiteful" caused by the death of Captain Maitland, which appointment, however, he only held for a month, returning to his ship at the

* Afterwards his assistant at the Admiralty in the Indian transport service, when Director of Transports. (See Appendix V.)

end of that time. On joining the "Spiteful" the midshipmen of the "Fox" presented him with a very handsome pair of epaulettes, and a pleasant letter.

On January 2nd, 1847, the long-expected promotion reached him, and he at once gave up his duties as first lieutenant to Lieutenant Rundle, and made arrangements to return to England *viâ* Suez and Egypt. On January 15th he received his discharge from the "Fox," and after a farewell dinner on board was presented by the commodore with a sword, as a mark of his esteem and regard, and left for Suez in the "Cleopatra," commanded by Captain Young of the Indian Navy, that same evening.

His younger brother, Robert, who was also serving in the "Fox" as mate, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in the same gazette.

The following letter was written by Sir Henry Blackwood to his father on his leaving the "Fox":—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I cannot allow the first lieutenant of 'Fox' to be promoted without writing to congratulate you upon it, and also on that of your other son. Of the commander I will only say that having now passed three years together, we have never had a difference of opinion: he has conducted himself to my *entire satisfaction*. I consider him the very best first lieutenant I ever met with. He leaves the 'Fox' to the regret of every one on board, and with the feeling that having strictly done his duty by all he has gained the esteem of all.

"For myself I feel his loss not only as an officer, but as a friend. We have lived together in entire confidence, and I trust that so long as we *do* live the feelings which I am certain we have mutually formed for each other will ever last. Excuse this hurried scrawl, but the mail was behind, and the other starts immediately. I was loth to let it go without bearing my congratulations.

"Ever believe me, dear Sir,

"Very truly yours,

"HENRY M. BLACKWOOD.

"BOMBAY, *January 2nd, 1847.*"

He reached Suez February 7th, and travelled overland to Cairo, where he spent a day or two seeing the sights of the place, before proceeding *viâ* Alexandria to Malta, which he reached towards the end of the month.

At Malta he rejoined my mother, who had been living there with her father during the greater part of the commission of the "Fox." He applied to the Admiralty for permission to remain in Malta until he could obtain further employment, which was granted, and he resided there till he received his appointment as commander of the "Vanguard" in January, 1848.

During this break in his active career he took lessons regularly in fencing, read a great deal, and enjoyed to the full the society of his wife and little daughter, now seven years old, in his father-in-law's delightful home. Pleasant though this change from active service was, his mind was busy all the time with matters concerning the service. He studied the various systems and station-bills of all classes of ships, both in our own and the French service, arriving at a complete scheme, which he considered as nearly perfect as possible, for a 120-gun ship. In all these matters my mother aided him, and I have several station-bills in my possession copied out in her neat handwriting from his dictation at this time.

The following entry in his diary under date November 5th, 1847, may be interesting to naval readers:—

"Heard from Borlase that Wise had named me for service with a friend of his.

"Squadron bent sails on the 3rd at 8 a.m. without warning. 'Hibernia' had her topsails at the mast-head and all men down from aloft twenty-two minutes before the last ship, and ten minutes before the second.

"'Hibernia' decidedly the smartest ship on the station, greater emulation and better spirit. From top to bottom she is efficient, and would never be taken aback. Sail-room kept open by day fore and aft, with forehatchway whips rove and sail tackle always pointed up as far as the main-deck. Sail tackle whips always rove, and topsail yards fitted with the slings, etc.

"Comparison of bending sails:—

"'Hibernia' from pipe, all set in ten minutes.

"Others as follows:—

“ ‘ Albion.’

“ ‘ Rodney.’

“ ‘ Trafalgar.’

“ ‘ Superb.’

“ ‘ Vanguard ’ from pipe, all set in thirty-two minutes.”

Towards the end of the year he began to get impatient for further service, and knowing of a probable vacancy in the “ Vanguard,” one of the ships on the station, he wrote to his father and other friends in England to forward his interests.

The following letter is from Captain William Baillie Hamilton, the well-known secretary to the Admiralty, to his father :—

“ ADMIRALTY,

“ *December 15th, 1847.*

“ MY DEAR MENDS,—We have as yet no application before us from the captain of the ‘ Vanguard ’ for the appointment of a commander, nor any official notice that the late commander is unfit from health or otherwise [to resume his post].

“ Should he appear, he would be superseded in favour of your son, or should any application arise, it would be immediately acceded to. At any rate, you may rely on no means or opportunity being lost of forwarding your son’s wishes, and I believe the captain will be fortunate who gets him for a commander of his ship.

“ I am very glad to be kindly remembered by Mrs. Mends, and have to beg you will offer my kindest remembrances to her and your family in return.

“ I will let you know if I see my way at all in any further step towards your son’s appointment.

“ Believe me, my dear Mends,

“ Yours very truly,

“ W. B. HAMILTON.

“ CAPTAIN B. MENDS, R.N.

“ You must be anxiously looking out for your ship. I am very glad to hear your appointment is so agreeable to you.”

CHAPTER IX

1848-1852

IN January, 1848, my father received his appointment from home as commander of the "Vanguard," 80, Captain Rich, in succession to her commander, who had been invalided. The "Vanguard" had been rather more than two years in commission, but she had been somewhat unfortunate, having lost her first captain by death, and her commander by invaliding, consequently she was in bad order. As the reader will have seen in the previous chapter, the last occasion that she bent sails with the fleet she had been twenty-two minutes behind the first ship; moreover, much drunkenness prevailed on board her.

One can well believe that it was a task of some difficulty, and a delicate matter withal, to get a ship out of such a slough and make her take a good position in the fleet; yet he went steadily to work, and in due course his efforts were crowned with success. He found the officers both good and zealous, and the ship's company a remarkably fine body of men. The fault lay in want of organization; no station-bills had been drawn out, for example, but he endeavoured to get at the existing arrangements by which the machine had been kept working so far, and instead of introducing sweeping changes, made a few comparatively simple modifications, which soon brought about an enormous improvement in the state of the ship.

It was whilst at sail-drill in Malta harbour in March, 1848, that he met with an accident that resulted in the mutilation and partial loss of the fingers of his left hand. I give the incident in his own words:—

"On the signal being made from the flagship to 'shift main-topsail yard and bend sails,' one morning in March, I very nearly lost my life, escaping, happily, with a maimed left

hand. Some delay occurred with the main-topsail; I ran forward to the hatchway, and was looking down it to try and ascertain where the hitch was, when the lieutenant on the main deck (Parish) gave the order for the men on the sail tackle to 'haul taut and run away with it.' I did not notice that I was standing on the bight of the rope, was tripped up, and should have been thrown down the hatchway had I not happily caught hold of the rope itself. I was obliged to hold on as I was over the hatchway, and in this manner was carried forward to the snatch-block; feeling that one arm at least must go, I shifted my hold so that the left hand came to the block first. Fortunately, the boatswain's mate saw what was happening, and piped 'belay!' But not until my unlucky left hand had been taken into the block. I was soon rescued from my awkward position, and was able to walk aft to the poop and give the necessary orders for carrying on the evolution, until the first lieutenant came to relieve me, and I was able to get below, where the surgeon (Douglas) soon put me to rights. He took off the end of one finger and part of the next, and in a quarter of an hour I was able to be on deck again. All, I think, were pleased to see me back, for in spite of my trouble we held a good place in the fleet that day."*

In April, 1848, whilst cruising with the fleet watching the Italian coast during the political troubles of that year, when Pius IX. headed the revolutionary party, he received news of the death of his father-in-law, Dr. Stilon, a great blow to him, as it was unexpected, and he had learnt to love and appreciate him heartily.

After a year spent in the "Vanguard," during which his efforts to improve the position of the ship in the fleet were attended with conspicuous success, she was ordered home in January, 1849, to pay off.

* My father makes light of this injury, which was, however, a very serious affair, from the great amount of laceration. It was attended with inflammation of an erysipelatous nature extending up the arm, and for years afterwards he suffered from troublesome neuralgia in the stump of the amputated finger.

Captain Rich, who was taking his own daughters, most kindly gave my mother and her little daughter a passage home; and after some delay at Gibraltar, where Admiral Sir Charles Napier, whose flag was flying in the "St. Vincent," detained the ship for some time pending the settlement of a trouble with the Riff Coast pirates, she reached Plymouth in the middle of March. Here orders were received for the ship to be stripped and cleared for paying off, no leave being given to officers or men till this was accomplished. Captain Rich, however, obtained leave to land with his family, so that the commander had it all his own way, and at the end of seven days she was ready, and lying alongside the sheer hulk waiting for her masts to be taken out. For this smartness special commendation was received from the Admiralty, and she was paid off.

My father now once more found himself unemployed, and all his attempts to get a ship proved futile. In this connection the following letter from Admiral Hyde Parker is of interest:—

"RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT,

August 29th, 1849.

"MY DEAR MENDS,—I would have the greatest pleasure in recommending you to any captain commissioning a ship of the line, but at the present time there does not appear any probability of any addition.

"I fear you might have been better employed than in the 'Vanguard.' I know a great reform was required there, which I hear you were not allowed to carry out. Your late captain, Sir H. Blackwood, has often spoke to me about you in the highest terms, and he tried hard to get you promoted.

"Pray remember us to Mrs. Mends.

"Yours most sincerely,

"HYDE PARKER.

"I was most truly sorry to see Caldwell's death in the papers. He was a thorough gentleman and a good officer.—H. P."

Towards the end of 1849, however, his old captain, Sir Henry Blackwood, was appointed to succeed Lord Hardwicke in command of the "Vengeance," 84, in the Mediterranean, and he applied for my father to accompany him; but

the Admiralty considered this inadvisable, as the ship was soon to return to England to pay off and re-commission, and it was not desirable to change commanders until she did so. My father, therefore, had to wait some time, and his appointment to her dates July 11th, 1850.

She returned to England, paid off, "all standing," and re-commissioned the following day, Sir Henry Blackwood going on in her as captain, whilst my father relieved John Walter Tarleton as commander. The ship then underwent a somewhat extensive refit, being re-masted, and having many important defects made good. When this was completed she anchored off "Stony Steps," on the Gosport side of Portsmouth harbour, where she spent the winter of 1850-51. During this time my mother was living in the village of Anglesey, Stokes Bay, for they both much preferred this comparatively quiet and countrified neighbourhood to the Portsmouth side of the harbour.

On January 7th, 1851, my father sustained a severe loss in the death of his captain and very intimate friend, Sir Henry Blackwood, who died after a short illness, the result of a cold caught whilst on a visit to Stanstead Park. He was buried with full naval honours in the Haslar cemetery, and on the day of his funeral the ship was put into mourning, her white streaks were smeared over with a composition of lampblack and gunpowder, all her running gear was let go, and the yards dishevelled. As the minute guns were firing she must have looked a mournful object indeed.

Amongst my father's papers are many letters from Sir Henry Blackwood; they would not be of interest to the general reader, but they sufficiently indicate the close and affectionate regard which the two men had for one another, and my father felt his loss very keenly.

Captain Lord Edward Russell succeeded to the command of the "Vengeance," and expressed a wish that my father should remain on as commander. The ship still continued to lie in Portsmouth harbour, her complement not being completed till the spring of the year 1851, when she was fortunate enough to receive large drafts from the crew of the "Powerful," Captain the Honourable R. Dundas, which had returned from the Mediterranean in a very high state of efficiency, her commander having been Henry Caldwell, a very smart officer and brother of an old friend of my

father.* The "Vengeance" was kept at Spithead until towards the end of the summer of 1851, when she sailed for the Mediterranean with as good a ship's company as were ever got together.

To quote my father's own words :—

"The ship's company had to understand me, as I had to appreciate their value, which I soon did, for on the first evening of reefing topsails at sea I saw I had good and expert seamen to deal with."

Lord and Lady Wriothesley Russell visited the ship at Spithead, and were on board when the "advance" was paid to the ship's company, being much interested and amused at the scene. When she left for the Mediterranean Mr. Delmé Radcliffe and Lord Charles Russell were guests with the captain. She called at Gibraltar, and proceeded thence to Malta, where she received orders to go to Alexandria to arrange for the removal of the obelisk, known as Cleopatra's Needle, to England. This, however, was not accomplished, as the reader will remember, till very many years afterwards. After a month spent at Alexandria, the "Vengeance" joined the fleet under Admiral Dundas, and soon took a lead in all manœuvres, being so frequently distinguished by signal as to create much emulation and not a little jealousy.

My mother came out to Malta and established a little home in Calcara Cottage, Bighi Bay, where many happy days were spent during the visits of the ship to Malta. The ship was not, however, a very long time on the station, for in the autumn of 1852 she received orders for England, with instructions to call at Lisbon *en route*. Here she joined the flag of Rear-Admiral Corry, flying in the "Prince Regent"; the "Rodney" and "Phaeton" comprising the rest of the squadron. The fame of the "Vengeance" as the crack ship in the Mediterranean had gone abroad, and Corry was determined to put her to as severe a test as possible during the short time that she was to form part of his command. My father thus describes what happened :—

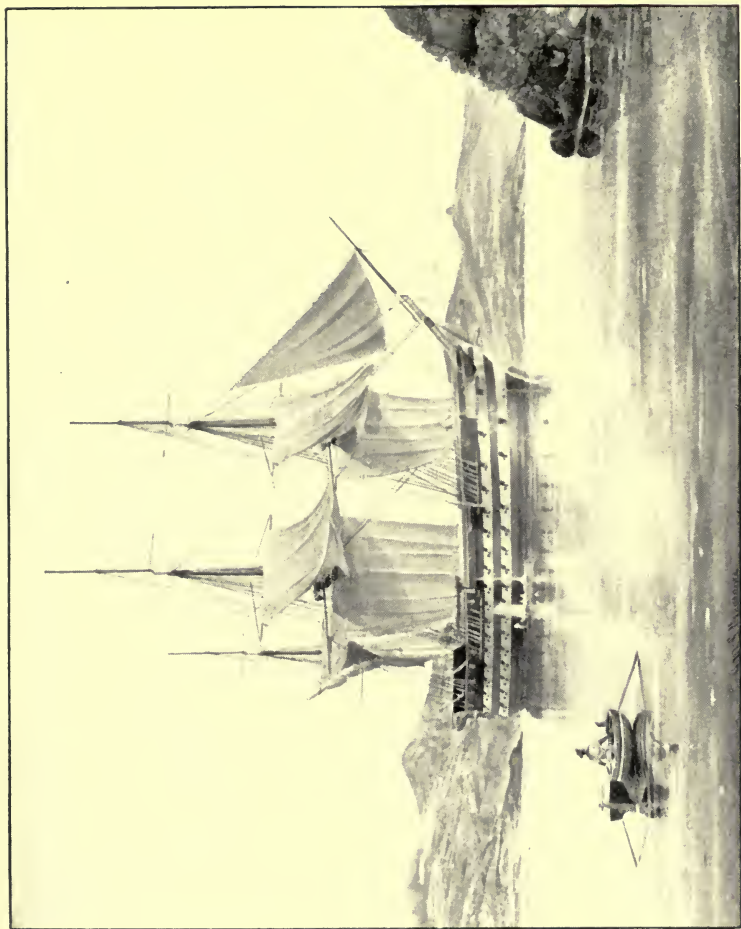
"We left Lisbon together for Spithead, and the second

* James Caldwell, who had been a lieutenant of the "Rodney" with him in 1837, and whose death is alluded to in the previous letter from Hyde Parker.

day at sea, having beaten the other ships out and out at reefing topsails and striking upper spars, etc., on the first day, the admiral made the signal to shift topgallant-masts, topsails, courses, and jib-boom in one manœuvre, which, if I may be allowed to say so, with all respect for the flag, was a most unseamanlike proceeding. 'Vengeance' completed everything and ranged up near the flagship nineteen minutes before the latter had finished. No further signal was made to us after this, and on arriving at Spithead I had some friendly chaff with my good friend Henry Caldwell, her commander, who told me that the admiral could hardly believe his eyes when he saw our drill aloft."

The "Vengeance" anchored at Spithead on Christmas Day, when my father received news of his promotion to post rank. Not without many regrets did he leave the ship; she had been the apple of his eye; all his energy and all his brain-power had been devoted to making her everything that a ship of war should be, and he had succeeded beyond his greatest expectations. In her he had had a free hand from the commencement; in her also his close friend, Henry Blackwood, had breathed his last, and the ship was thus associated in his mind with so many memories that he could not leave her without a pang of regret.

On his passage round the lower deck for the last time, the cheers of the ship's company, many of whom had become personal friends, were almost more than he could stand. And when he finally left the ship the good fellows manned the rigging and cheered him till they were hoarse.



H.M.S. "VENGEANCE."

From a painting by Captain George Pechell Mends, R.N.

[illegible]

CHAPTER X

1852-1854

As recorded in the last chapter, my father said good-bye to the "Vengeance" at Spithead at the end of December, 1852. He then journeyed to Plymouth to pay a short visit to his parents before joining his wife and children again at Malta. A letter, however, was presently received from my mother, saying that she had broken up their little home at Malta, and was on her way through France to join him in England. The political horizon in the East was overcast, the preliminary troubles which culminated later in the Crimean War were already beginning to brew, and my mother, keenly alive to the interests of her husband's professional career, felt, with true instinct, that this was no time for him to be hidden away in Malta.

They met in Paris, where they spent a few days, and witnessed the marriage of the Emperor Napoleon III., returning to England soon after. They settled temporarily at Woolwich, in order that my father might study steam and the comparatively new art of marine engineering at the dock-yard there. He threw himself heart and soul into this study, of which he was one of the first of his profession to foresee the vast possibilities. In this connection I may say that, although a thorough seaman, he was entirely free from the somewhat narrow-minded prejudices of many of the naval men of his day against the innovation of the steam-engine in ships of war. He took care during this period, however, not to let the Admiralty be too forgetful of him, and wrote several times to Admiral Hyde Parker, his old captain, applying for a command, but always received the answer "to wait"—by no means a welcome one to a man of his energetic temperament.

The course in "steam" being completed, they went to Plymouth to be near his parents, and there passed a good

deal of the year 1853. During this time the trouble with Russia had increased, and Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, who was our minister at Stockholm, was recalled to active service, and in September was ordered to hoist his flag as second in command of the Mediterranean fleet.

My father has often described to me the circumstances which led to his offering his services to Sir Edmund Lyons as flag-captain (although personally unknown to him), and I got him to write an account of this episode, which was a turning point in his career, for it illustrates well the high professional reputation he had won for himself throughout the service.

I give it in his own words :—

“My dear wife, having heard of the appointment of Sir Edmund to the Mediterranean, suggested to me at breakfast that I should offer myself to him as flag-captain, an idea which I scouted, as I was unknown to him, and many men I knew were offering themselves for the appointment who had far more influence than had I. On the next morning she again proposed it, and I still resisted the idea, thinking that to apply was quite useless. However, she returned to the charge again on yet a third morning, and observed that if anything should ever indicate that I might have had a chance of getting it I should never forgive myself. This settled my determination, and I accordingly addressed myself to Sir Edmund, referring him to Admirals Sir William Parker and Hyde Parker (who was then at the Admiralty), and by return of post I received a kind letter from Admiral Lyons, offering me the appointment on certain conditions, as follows :—

“‘UNITED SERVICE CLUB,

“‘October 19th, 1853.

“‘MY DEAR CAPTAIN MENDS,—I am so much pleased with your letter, as well as all I hear of you, that I would at once accept your offer unconditionally, if it were not incompatible with long-cherished hopes and promises to do so. It, however, occurred to me that it *might* not be disagreeable, and *certainly* not disadvantageous to you o be appointed my flag-captain, with the understanding that you

are to remain so if Captain Symonds* should prefer remaining in the command of the "Arethusa" to changing with you, but if he should, on the contrary, wish to exchange with you, the command of the "Arethusa" would devolve on you. I proposed this to Admiral Parker, and he said he had no doubt whatever of your being glad to have "such a chance." When I proposed it to Sir James Graham he at first considered that you were too young a captain for the command of so fine a frigate as the "Arethusa," but his wish to oblige me and your high character prevailed, and he assented. So now it depends upon yourself, and I shall be glad to have your decision as soon as possible. My flagship is to be the "Agamemnon," but as she requires some alterations in her fittings, which will take a little time to accomplish, I am to go to the Bosphorus in the "Terrible" and you are to bring the "Agamemnon" out to me, if you accede to the proposed arrangement. I shall give Hillyar his option of remaining as commander, and my secretary will be Mr. Cleeve.

"In the utmost haste to save the post,

"I am, yours,

"E. LYONS."

"As I had not been long promoted, and would gladly have taken the command of anything that floated, in the troublous times which I saw ahead, I felt overpowered with pleasure on receipt of this letter, and telegraphed back, "Accept offer with pleasure."

"Sir Edmund told my father afterwards that he had had 132 applications, and that he and the Duke of Norfolk were discussing them together, when mine came in; he threw it across the table to the Duke, who, after reading it, said, 'That's the man for you!'

"On my arrival in town the next morning Sir Edmund cut short my thanks, saying, 'You have only got yourself to thank; I was in the position of a man wanting a good physician, and heard that you were the best, hence my selection.'"

"I went to the Admiralty, received my commission, and as I was coming away with it in my pocket I met poor dear Fitzroy, whom I had not seen since the 'Thetis' days.

* Afterwards Admiral of the Fleet Sir Thomas Symonds.

"After arranging a few affairs I left London to take over the command of the 'Agamemnon' from Sir T. Maitland.* I found a fine ship's company, but the ship not smart enough for me, except as to gunnery and small arms, to which everything else had been subordinated. My cousin, Harry Hillyar, was the commander, and the officers one and all a good set."

The ship was rapidly equipped, for both officers and men were anxious to get out to the East. Before leaving, however, a somewhat curious accident occurred, which might easily have been attended with more serious consequences than it was, and have prevented the "Agamemnon" from playing the prominent *rôle* she afterwards did in the history of the Crimea. She was making a trial run under steam round the Eddystone Lighthouse, for the purpose of testing a new propeller,† and was going at full speed when the blades of the screw suddenly broke off. Of course the engines immediately began to race, and had steam not been promptly shut off would probably have damaged themselves seriously.

The accident is thus described by my father :—

"The momentary effect on the ship was extraordinary ; the masts seemed inclined to jump out of her. I could not imagine what had happened, and, seeing some scared faces, I ordered the drummers to 'beat to quarters,' and occupied everybody's minds in securing the guns for sea. The cause was, however, rapidly ascertained, and we soon made sail. The engines being by Penn, of Greenwich, and therefore as perfect as possible, both in workmanship and material, escaped with only slight injury to the feed-pump plungers.

"I was extremely anxious that the ship should not be delayed any longer by being again placed in the dockyard hands ; I therefore wrote to my friend at the Admiralty, Admiral Hyde Parker, pointing out to him that, as we had a lifting screw, a new propeller could be shipped on board

* Afterwards Lord Lauderdale.

† The "Agamemnon" was a screw two-decked line-of-battle ship.

without going into dock. All went as I desired. Messrs. Penn had been apprised by telegram of the mishap, and fresh 'plungers' were sent down to us by them. We had already shipped our powder, shot, and shell, and in four days we were ready to start."

He goes on :—

"In November we left with orders to sail out the whole way, not using our steam, which was very provoking, for we encountered strong east winds in the gut of Gibraltar. However, we thrashed her at it, anchoring for one night only at Tangier, as I wished to avoid Gibraltar. We carried away a main-topsail yard and also a main-topgallant yard, for I did not spare the canvas, and on getting into the Mediterranean we picked up a nice westerly breeze, so that we soon reached Malta. Here I found orders awaiting me to proceed at once, without delay. We were much lionized during our short stay, being the first screw line-of-battle ship, built and engineered as such by England, to put in there. We filled up with provisions for the fleet lying in the Bosphorus, and left Malta in December, and, having carried a strong breeze through the Archipelago and Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmora, we anchored with the fleet near my old ship, the 'Vengeance,' on Christmas Eve, 1853.

"The 'Arethusa' was with the fleet, and I found that Captain Symonds had elected to serve with the admiral, and that I was to take command of the 'Arethusa,' which indeed I was nothing loth to do, provided only that I was to be kept in commission, which Sir Edmund Lyons, both publicly and privately, was making every effort to ensure, for war was imminent; Sinope had been attacked by a Russian fleet, and Turkish ships of war destroyed,* to the everlasting disgrace of the allies, who had timely warning of the impending stroke.

* See Appendix VI.

"The fleets of England and France, acting under orders from their respective governments, entered the Black Sea in January, 1854, leaving me as senior officer in the Bosphorus.

"I at once waited on the ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe,* whom I knew well. He was very gracious, but very angry at the long detention of the fleet in the Bosphorus; the fact being that he and the naval commander-in-chief (Admiral Dundas) were at variance. He conversed with me for long, was very anxious that I should proceed to the Archipelago, as the Greeks were disposed to give trouble, but my orders were imperative to remain in the Bosphorus unless anything of very serious moment necessitated my leaving it, no other ship of war being present in support of the Embassy; I was in great dread of leaving, lest anything should occur in the Black Sea during my absence.

"Return stores and invalids were put on board the 'Arethusa' twice, with the view of sending me to England; but other counsels prevailed, and at last orders came from England that the 'Arethusa' was to remain on the station, and her complement, which had been weakened by Symonds taking some men with him to the 'Agamemnon,' was to be filled up. I sent trustworthy petty officers to Constantinople to hunt up and enlist seamen, and in three days filled all my vacancies, and very soon joined the fleet in the Black Sea."

During this period (between the 4th and 23rd of January, 1854), whilst my father was left behind with the "Arethusa" in the Bosphorus, Sir Edmund Lyons was detached with a strong squadron, French and English, to Sinope and the Circassian coast, convoying some Turkish steamers. It was on January 6th also that the "Retribution," Captain Drummond, was sent to Sebastopol with despatches; she entered the harbour, took note of the ships of war, the general strength of the fortifications, etc., and Lieutenant

* The acquaintance dated from the "Actæon" twenty years before.

O'Reilly made some admirable sketches of the place from one of her tops.

I may here remark that Sir Edmund Lyons had previous knowledge of the Black Sea, having as far back as 1829 or 1830, when in command of the frigate "Blonde," 46, anchored either in or just outside the harbour of Sebastopol. The "Blonde" had been instantly placed in quarantine by the Russians; but manning his galley with a crew of officers, and with a yellow flag in the bows, Captain Lyons had poked about the harbour, and no doubt taken stock of what he saw.

To continue my father's narrative:—

"War was declared, and the news was received by the allied fleets lying off Baljik during a snowstorm on April 9th, 1854, with colours flying and yards manned by the cheering crews.

"In consequence of a flag of truce having been fired upon at Odessa,* it was decided to destroy the government works and arsenal at that port, and several steamers of the allies were told off for this service, being placed under the orders of Captain Lewis Tobias Jones,† of the 'Sampson,' who conducted the operations very successfully with his usual skill and gallantry.

"My orders in the 'Arethusa' were to cruise off and on, and create a diversion by attacking a small work at the throat of the Mercantile Mole, as well as throwing an occasional shot into a battery at its end, whilst the steamers made the main attack on the Imperial Mole and the defences on the north side of the town.

"My part of the programme I, and I think all on board 'Arethusa,' carried out with the most intense enjoyment. We had a delightful working breeze, and the men being on their mettle and working beautifully, I was able to handle the ship exactly as I wished; we stood in twice, tacked close off the Mole, and engaged the works on it in reverse;

* A ship of war, the "Furious," Captain Loring, had been sent to Odessa to bring away the consul, and her boat, under a flag of truce, had been fired upon.

† Afterwards Admiral Sir Lewis Tobias Jones, G.C.B.

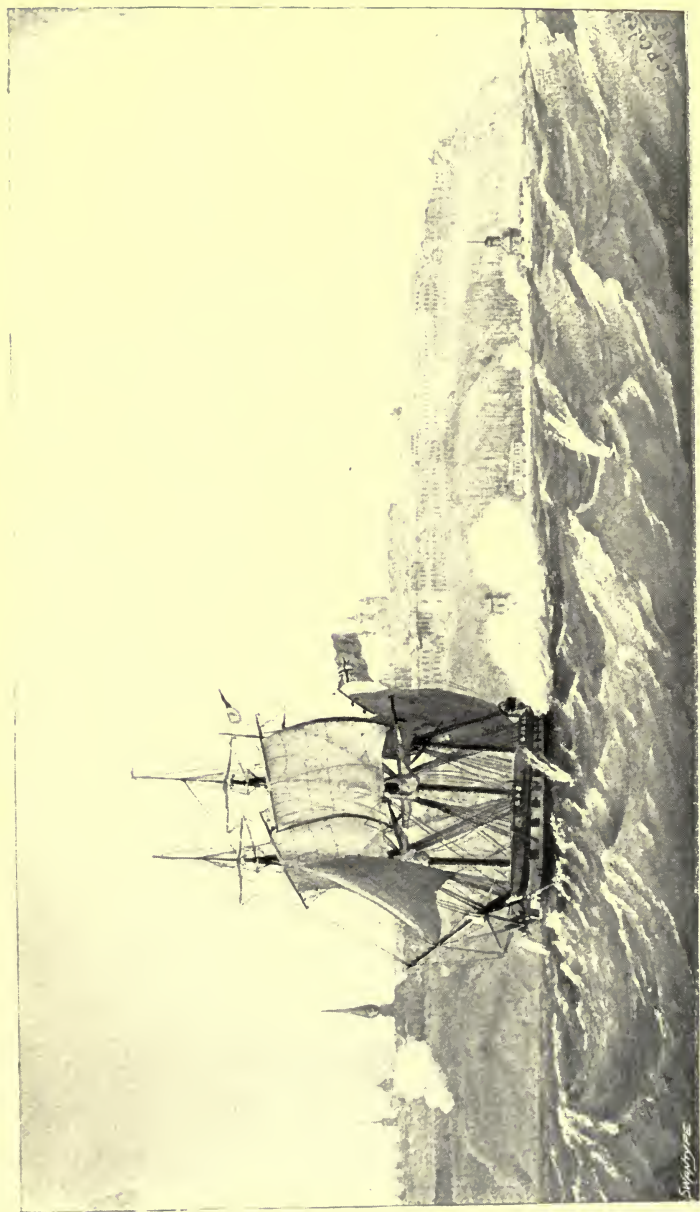
having on the second occasion got the range accurately, we poured in a destructive fire as we went about. A warm fire was opened upon us from a few guns on the heights as well as from the Mole batteries, but owing, I suppose, to our rapid movement, the ship was not struck. The manœuvre caused great excitement and pleasure to those on board the big ships which were anchored off out of gunshot. My signal of recall was made when close in the second time, but for a few moments I disregarded it, and completed the manœuvre, keeping the answering pennant at the dip, but up went the Dutch ensign from the 'Britannia,'* accompanied by a gun, and out I had to come. I expected a reprimand when I went on board the 'Admiral' to report, but the enthusiasm of the fleet, and the cheers given to us as we passed along the lines, mollified the chief, and I was simply told not to go in again, but to keep under weigh, off and on, until ordered to anchor. To my surprise, several of the French captains paid the 'Arethusa' the compliment of coming to call upon me afterwards, to express their admiration for our manœuvre.

"It was a relief to our feelings to have done something, though I lost my galley, blown away by the fire of my own guns through the stern ports during the course of the day."

I am indebted to the kind courtesy of Captain Rogers, who was at the time a mate on board the 'Arethusa,' for the following remarks which he has kindly sent me on this episode. He writes:—

"The main attack was made on the Imperial Mole on the north side of the town; our 'Arethusa' attack was on the Quarantine Mole to the east of the town, where some guns were mounted. After standing in and opening fire, we tacked and stood out, while the eight middle guns on the port side of the main-deck were transported to the stern ports. When we stood in again, two guns opened fire on us from the top of the hill, as well as those from the

* The flagship of Admiral Dundas. The Dutch ensign hoisted at the main is the senior officer's recall for detached ships.



"We poured in a destructive fire as we went about."

From a water-colour drawing by Lieut. Conquer Coles, R.N.

[Faint bleed-through from reverse side]

Mole. A reef was taken in the topsails by the sail trimmers, while the rest of the men at quarters were firing; this was done to prevent 'Arethusa' from going fast through the water, and so to allow better aim."

I believe this to be the last occasion when a British frigate fought an independent action under sail; for at that time, though subsequently altered, the "Arethusa" had no steam power. As such, the incident has an historic value.

Not unnaturally, perhaps, this feat of seamanship performed by my father in the "Arethusa" has been by many attributed to Sir Thomas Symonds, the period during which my father relieved that officer in command of the frigate being a comparatively short one. In an article entitled "The Silver Streak" in the *Nineteenth Century* for May, 1881, Admiral Lord Dunsany quotes the following allusion to the incident:—

"A French naval writer in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* describes with admiration the brilliant manœuvre of a British frigate, commanded by Sir T. Symonds (now Admiral of the Fleet), during the attack on the forts of Odessa. A strong breeze was blowing, making it necessary to reef topsails. The frigate had carried sail to baffle the enemy's artillerymen by the rapidity of her movements. When it became necessary to shorten sail, she delivered one broadside, hove in stays, reefed her topsails while tacking, and then delivered the other broadside. No such brilliant *tour de force* can be ever performed now."

The writer, however, took the earliest opportunity of publishing a correction when informed of his error.*

The following pleasant letter, also, which I find amongst my father's papers, is of interest in this connection:—

"BLIGHMOUNT, SOUTHAMPTON,
July 4th, 1881.

"MY DEAR MENDS,—I am glad to find that you are not so angry with me as I am with myself for my most stupid and inexcusable

* Note which appeared in *Nineteenth Century* magazine, appended to an article of Lord Dunsany's in February, 1882:—

"I take this opportunity of rectifying an error in my article, 'The Silver Streak,' of May last. The brilliant feat attributed there to another distinguished officer was really performed by the present Vice-Admiral Sir William Mends, K.C.B., then in command of the 'Arethusa.' After the episode in question the gallant officer, as his frigate passed between the lines of the allied fleets, received the hearty cheers of both, and—what is more unusual for a British seaman—the *accolades* of his French colleagues.—DUNSANY."

mistake in attributing to another a feat of which you might well be proud. Pray believe it was not from carelessness, but from the failing memory of advanced years.

"Still, I feel that so far as my poor article may have been read, I *did* rob you of laurels which any officer might well value, and the question is, what reparation can I make?

"It strikes me that if the editor of the *Nineteenth Century* would, as an act of justice, just insert your manly and only too modest letter to me, you might forgive me for making that use of it.

"I say 'too modest,' for I cannot agree with you that what I called a 'brilliant *tour de force*' was 'only what every seaman would have done under the circumstances.' It was, perhaps, what every seaman would have wished to have done, but every ship there present was not an 'Arethusa,' nor was every captain a Mends, or else this manœuvre would not have attracted the attention which it did.

"Trusting that you will forgive my stupid mistake, and allow me to attempt to repair it,

"Ever yours sincerely,

"DUNSANY."

My father continues:—

"Soon after this the 'Leander,' frigate, commanded by Captain George St. Vincent King, was dispatched to Malta, and about a week after her we followed, to be docked and to bring up provisions, etc. On arrival at Malta the 'Leander' had not arrived, but she came in the next day; 'Arethusa' had carried a heavy press of sail, which probably accounts for our having passed her. Being senior officer, 'Leander' was taken in hand first, and left Malta on her return journey about a week or ten days before us; however, as we were running up the Dardanelles with a fair wind, we overtook her at anchor below the upper castles; she weighed on seeing us approach, and we were abreast of her on arriving off the Seraglio Point. 'Sampson' took 'Leander' in tow, and 'Tiger' * took us and proceeded with us to join the fleet in the Black Sea, off Baljik.

* Captain Giffard, afterwards killed when his ship got ashore under the Russian batteries and was captured.

"On arrival a rumour had reached me that some differences had taken place between Sir Edmund Lyons and Captain Symonds, and presently Captain Charles Eden of the 'London,' being deputed by the interested parties, and sanctioned by the admiral, came to me proposing my re-exchange with Symonds. I felt very sorry to give up so beautiful a frigate, to which, with her officers, I had already become attached, but I also felt that I owed the appointment to Sir Edmund Lyons, so I acquiesced, and in a few days was back in my old ship the 'Agamemnon.'

"Troops from England and France were gradually massing at Varna for the contemplated invasion of the Crimea, the capture of Sebastopol having been decided upon by both governments. Sir Edmund Lyons was charged by Admiral Dundas with making the necessary arrangements and preparations for the expeditionary force. Sir Edmund being in full accord with the government by whom he had been sent out, was the moving spirit and genius of this great enterprise, but though he knew that details were important to success, yet, as General Sir George Brown often used to say, 'Lyons hates details,' consequently it fell to my lot to think out and arrange for the whole of the embarkation, transport, and disembarkation on a hostile coast (down to the smallest detail) of that great army.

"Sir George Brown, being a very old friend of Sir Edmund's, lived almost entirely on board 'Agamemnon,' with his A.D.C. Lieutenant Edmund Whitmore;* both became great friends of mine.

"A temporary dockyard was established on the south shore of Varna Bay, where a young subaltern of Engineers, Lieutenant Gerald Graham,† was stationed with a few sappers employed in the construction of a pier, at which troops and stores could be landed from small steamers. I

* Afterwards Sir Edmund Whitmore, and recently Military Secretary to H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge.

† Afterwards General Sir Gerald Graham, v.c., k.c.b.

had the supervision of the whole, and soon had the artificers of the fleet, aided by large working parties of seamen, hard at work.

"The 'Bellerophon,' Captain Lord George Paulet, and the 'Sampson,' Captain Lewis Tobias Jones, were placed under Sir Edmund's immediate orders, whilst the commander-in-chief, with the bulk of the fleet, remained cruising. Sir George Brown used repeatedly to say to Sir Edmund, 'You can't take us over, Lyons,' and, knowing that the French (who, though with some bright exceptions, hated the idea of the expedition) were paying great attention to the organization and detail of the transport of their army, I gave the matter my most earnest attention, and after some days was able to draw up the outline of a complete scheme of transport.

"It was Sir Edmund's custom to write letters and transact special business early in the morning. One morning, therefore, I took him my plan for the transport of the army sketched out in the rough. After reading the papers through very attentively, he took off his spectacles and observed, 'You seem to have given a great deal of attention to this.' I replied 'that as he was charged with the arrangements for the expedition, I, as his captain, felt it my duty to offer my suggestions on the matter.' I added, 'I hear it constantly said on all sides that we cannot carry the army over and land them.' And I narrated to him what I had seen the Russian fleet do for the Russian army in the Bosphorus in 1833.* I also added that 'with our fleet of transports and so many vessels of war it should be easy, and only required organization.' Sir Edmund then said, 'I will excuse you from all supervision in the fitting yard, and get you to give all your attention to this'—a task which I willingly undertook.

"After breakfast on that day, Sir Edmund made me accompany him on shore to Lord Raglan, that I might read

* See page 31.

over the outline of my scheme. Lord Raglan thoroughly approved it, saying, 'It is the best scheme of transport I have ever seen,' and I was then and there officially entrusted with the organization of the whole thing by both chiefs. I asked for the assistance of a military officer with authority to obtain all details of the force to be moved, and a most excellent one was appointed, Captain John Adye, R.A.* As soon as it was known in the fleet that I was on the work, all my brother officers gave me their best help, and at the end of eight days of the hardest work I have ever known I had the papers ready for the army printers."

About this time my father received the following letter from my grandfather:—

"STOKE,

"May 17th, 1854.

"MY DEAR WILLIAM,—I have so long delayed writing you that I hardly know where to begin, and perhaps cannot do better than commence my letter with warm and affectionate congratulations upon the interesting part which 'Arethusa' performed at the bombardment of a part of Odessa on the 22nd ult., which although not mentioned in your admiral's official report of that service, has not escaped general notice in the newspapers, particularly the *Times*, where we first saw it, as from its own correspondent, and since in most of the leading journals, some of which have been sent you. Much surprise is generally felt and expressed that your ship, having taken an active, though brief part in the affair, should be omitted in this report, which is suspected of being untruthful in consequence, and will most likely be the ground of some enquiry. Everything, however, is fully known at the Admiralty, as well as elsewhere, so that you need not take any trouble about it.

"18th. I had just taken up my pen to finish my scroll, when the post brought me a letter from George, dated the 5th inst. from near Stockholm, all very well, and mustered a splendid fleet, quite equal he says to anything the Russians could bring against them, although their fleet amounted to twenty-eight sail of the line, besides numerous gunboats. The *Swedes*, he says, were of opinion that

* Afterwards General Sir John Adye, G.C.B.

they would not venture out, but that some of the chiefs of our fleet thought *they would*; they (our fleet) were to sail the next day for the Gulf of Finland, the ice having broken up, but nobody knew what was intended to be done when they got there; all the buoys and lights had been removed, and the *general* opinion seemed to be that, as on former occasions, we shall have to blockade them. He adds that the Swedes had just brought the news on board of the bombardment of Odessa and its destruction, meaning of course the arsenal and military part of it. *Austria* seems almost decided upon joining the Western Alliance, and only awaits an answer to its ultimatum from Russia, which if unfavourable will at once decide that power, and several others probably, to make common cause against the tyrant aggressor; every day only adds fresh conviction to what his real object is—and now or never is the time to frustrate his diabolical designs and knavish tricks, nor need we doubt the result. . . . Always remember me kindly to Sir E. Lyons when you meet; Sir W. Parker kindly called on Sunday last, but being at dinner we did not see him. I hear he is much broken in health. We heard from Robert also this week, who was quite well, liked his cutter extremely, and appeared to be doing very well indeed. . . . And now God bless you, my dear William, and believe me to be,

“Your affectionate father,

“W. B. MENDES.”

CHAPTER XI

1854

THE following extracts from the letters which my father wrote daily to my mother tell the story of the stirring events in which he now took a prominent part, and give his opinions upon men, matters, and events in as good a way, perhaps, as the best-kept diary could do.

He also kept a journal at this period, but there is nothing of real importance in it which does not appear in the letters, and it can easily be understood that time and opportunity being not always available, one task of writing per diem was as much as could receive his whole attention. I need hardly say, therefore, that the letters are far more ample in detail than the entries in the diary.

It is necessary for the reader, before commencing the extracts from the letters, to understand fully the events immediately preceding and connected with the events of the period to which they relate, even at the risk of a little repetition, for which, therefore, I make no apology. The story as told by the letters is, however, not quite complete, and where there are gaps I draw upon the journal to fill them.

“‘*Agamemnon*,’ Varna, August 1st, 1854.—It was Sir Edmund’s intention to have started this morning for the fleet, but he received orders yesterday to remain here in command to superintend various arrangements for embarkation and disembarkation, which he has put under my control entirely. In the afternoon, after a conference with Lord Raglan, and further communications with the commander-in-chief, Sir Edmund has decided to move this afternoon—first to Baljik to see the admiral, then to Constantinople for a day or two, where his presence is necessary. The fact

is, we are sure to be at the seat of everything that is going on. I went away at four this morning, to set my plans in train and have my documents ready. I have established a dockyard, put in a lieutenant as superintendent with a guard appointed a master shipwright from the warrant officers, and sundry addenda for the work in hand."

"*'Agamemnon,' Varna, August 12th, 1854.*—Here is Saturday night, and I have said not a word to you since Wednesday morning, the day on which I closed my last letter. We quitted the Bosphorus on that evening, reached Baljik the next, left it at one yesterday after taking on board Lord Raglan, and arrived here at three—I fancy to remain a few days. Some cases of cholera have shown themselves in the ships, which are now at sea cruising for change of air. Two men of this ship died of it whilst at Buyukdere the other day, but they had been ill two or three days before complaining, and established a panic which increased the sick-list immediately; but I get the premonitory symptoms attended to, and the men are quickly well. The French ships and troops have suffered much, but I fear they are very careless. The division of their army marched up towards the Danube, in spite of the advice of Lord Raglan, with a view to inure the men to hardship. The consequence was they had bad water, indifferent food, disease ensued, and out of the 12,000 combatants they have returned with only 5000 effective men, having lost by deaths 5000 and 2000 sick. The French seamen from the ships at Baljik ransacked the vineyards and fruit gardens, eating the ripe and the unripe alike. The consequence has been serious. Cholera is everywhere, without doubt. The prevailing sickness is diarrhœa, which, if neglected, runs soon into it; so it behoves people to be careful. We have taken steps at least to ensure confidence, if not prevent the disease, by making the whole ship's company wear flannel belts a foot broad; providing an outside bed-ticking, in order that it may be frequently cleaned;

throwing open the whole sleeping-decks to ventilation; keeping people out of the sun during the day, and allowing no fruit to enter the ship. I hope by these means, under Providence, to keep out so terrible a pestilence.

“As we quitted Varna the night before last a fire broke out in the town in a spirit shop; it ran like wildfire in very truth; in spite of soldiers, sailors, engines, and vigorous measures, it succeeded in destroying, before it could be arrested, vast quantities of commissariat stores, barley, biscuit, salt, etc.; it reached a large building in which was stored live shells, and actually heated the walls of the magazine, on which the gallant fellows held their ground, keeping the mass covered with wet blankets. The Turks and French I hear behaved admirably, whilst some bearing the name of Englishmen disgraced it by drinking and plundering. Oh, sad reflection! I should be very sorry, were I called upon before a court, to give my opinion of the causes of this lack of discipline. If Sir Edmund were not here, I fear England's flag would be disgraced; as it is, he has to struggle hard to save its credit. A wet blanket has been laid upon our shoulders for months, whilst England is paying freely her millions to gain a peace by an energetic war.

“I hear it constantly said by sensible men, ‘I do not write to England because I cannot tell untruths, and the truth must not be told.’

“I have been scribbling away to-day voluminous orders for the edification of the Marine officers, who have got into their heads that the duties of the ship are extraneous, for which they were never intended, but that they were sent here *pour passer le temps* in honorary idleness, ready to take the place of the Guards. Then I have been writing a code of orders for the better order of the ship's company, and regulating the routine for Hillyar. I visited also the dock-yard I established here about ten days ago, in company

with the admiral, who took care of me under his umbrella. He was greatly pleased with the progress made, and the arrangements altogether. This occupied me a couple of hours to enquire into. I ran away for a few minutes to inspect all decks, which I occasionally do after hours to see that matters are really right; some people will not welcome me warmly in the morning, I fancy. The troops are encamped on the heights surrounding this very pretty anchorage; the camp fires look so cheery, and tell that men of war are there. It is in contemplation to move the army by sea somewhere, and I fancy Sir Edmund is to conduct the movement, which means that success will attend it wherever it be; he puts confidence into all minds, explains away the misgivings of the croakers, and condemns the declaiming, rallying round him the sympathies and feelings of high and low, and yet he hates detail, and says so. He grasps the great features of any subject, knows the detail is necessary, but says to me sometimes, 'You and the general manage that, I see you understand it.' The general means Sir George Brown, who takes me into his counsels."

"*August 14th.*—A good deal of sickness prevails, usual at this season, but specially brought under notice by the number of men congregated here; the French suffer much on shore as well as afloat, I think from many causes, overcrowding, poor feeding, uncleanly habits. The fire here has done considerable harm to the magazines of stores; the commissariat officers are, in consequence, much embarrassed and straitened, but all will be well—if there were but energy in *some* to meet it; however, I do not despond—for we have head and energy in 'Agamemnon' for anything. I have been closeted with Sir G. Brown for two hours this morning; he is a most excellent man of business, clear and correct; luckily he has taken a fancy to my way of doing things, and consults with me much; his quarters are of the roughest.

"Many of the old officers of the army are obliged to retreat homewards, and some of the young, the flower of our country, are *hors de combat*; they have been unable to contend against bad food, bad climate, and hard work. The Russians have retreated and left nothing to do—in fact, at their weapons they beat us, because we cannot attack them in their strongholds. I know not what will be the next move; Sir Edmund longs for activity."

"*August 16th.*—The cholera has seized upon some of the ships in a most frightful manner. Strange to say, it has attacked the ships of three decks more violently than the others, in a very large ratio, but the mortality on board the 'Montebello,' 'Ville de Paris,' 'Valmy,' and 'Britannia' has been terrible; the first lost 152 in three days, the second 120 in three days, the third 80 in ten days, but the last, 'Britannia,' lost 50 in one night and 10 the subsequent day; 'Trafalgar,' 'Vengeance,' 'London,' and 'Rodney' have suffered less considerably, whilst the 'Queen,' frigates, and steamers (except the 'Furious') have escaped altogether. The ships with us at this anchorage have had a case or two; we had one when in the Bosphorus, but none since. It attacked the troops also in some localities severely, in others slightly; but all the divisions are moved about hither and thither in search of better positions, with much benefit. I pray we may be spared such a visitation, as we have much to do here; all precautions are taken that can be thought of—we are in the Lord's hands. It is very remarkable that scarcely an officer has fallen victim anywhere; I suppose it is that he lives better and attends at once to premonitory symptoms, whereas the lower grades try to fight off the doctor and tumble into their graves.

"With the vast work we have on hand, the arrangement for a great expedition to organize—for I will not conceal from you that one is on foot on a greater scale than the world has yet seen or heard of, namely, the movement by

sea of 80,000 men with war material—and this vast fleet, as it were, on one's shoulders—for Sir Edmund consults and arranges much with me for the general conduct of it—I say, with all this weighty matter to think of, conceive how sweet and delicious are your precious letters, giving me an account of my dearly-loved household, wife, and children.”

“*August 19th.*—The fearful pestilence that has attacked us seems to be on the decline. The ‘*Britannia*’ has suffered much ; she has lost 100 men. We hear that the exertions of the officers in their attendance upon the sick and dying alone restored confidence and preserved order ; she became utterly demoralized and disorganized. The sick have been removed to a hospital ship, the healthy to transports ; and a general purification is going on, which, I am told by Drummond, who looked in here last evening, was much needed. Certainly the attack upon her has been very remarkable. We have been mercifully and wonderfully spared hitherto, but I live in hourly expectation of its falling among us. I have assembled the officers, and prepared their minds for the duty they will have to perform if it does, and arranged for the immediate attendance to, as well as place of, the sick and the dying. We have issued flannel for belts ; keep people out of the sun as much as possible ; attend strictly to ventilation ; and caution all to appeal quickly for medical relief. I hope earnestly that our little efforts may be attended with success.”

“*3 p.m.*—I have been away again, and since I was with you, two hours ago, they have reported the death of Captain Smith of the ‘*Simoom*.’ He dined here last night, appeared full of health and spirits, was taken ill at two in the morning, but did not send for the surgeon until half-past four. I know not what measures were used, but he died about an hour ago of decided cholera. I hear he leaves a large family unprovided for. I have just been on board to

make arrangements for his funeral to-morrow morning. We had a great rehearsal this morning of embarking guns and horses and landing them on a beach. It was entrusted to me, and was attended with success. Lord Raglan, Generals Brown, England, etc., with hosts of officers, Army and Navy and transport service. We are to have another trial on Monday, rectifying the faults discovered, and I think we shall do. I am sure we shall do, for the success of to-day silenced the clamour of many who talk like geese. I get on with Sir Edmund, I see he reposes more confidence in me daily in matters of importance. My system and habit of employing the mind on many things at once, helps me, and I find that the more responsibility, the greater the extent of the work, the better I am able to manage it all, the more clear my head. Ship matters seem child's-play—a mere amusement; whilst the embarkation and disembarkation of an army, with all detail of boats, pontoons, horses, guns, waggons, carts, provisions, tents, and ammunition, afford me a field I rejoice to work in. All work well, the spur of spirit and the whip of good feeling in the hand of Sir Edmund at the head. I will defy a man not to do his duty under such a man. However, I hope I have ever done mine, and shall continue to do it. If it please God to spare me, neither you nor my darling children shall want for anything that a fair reputation can procure.”

“August 21st.—I am still as hard at work as ever, but it is work of a higher order than has before fallen to my lot. Sir Edmund has paid me the compliment to say that with me he does not want a captain of the fleet; he would only be in my way, and nothing could be better than my plans, etc. All this gratifying; he did not say it to me but to Cleeve, the secretary. We had another grand rehearsal this morning of embarking and disembarking guns and horses before representatives of Army and Navy—generals and admirals—and we did it *perfectly*. Nothing could have been better, and the

plaudits were loud and long. I make out a regular "station-bill" for the proceedings of the fleet every afternoon for the following day, and sent it round. Three weeks ago any grand expedition was considered hopeless, because the Navy was behind, and now, thanks to Sir Edmund, we have boats, pontoons, steamers, everything in abundance, and a will under him that keeps things going."

"August 22nd.—Disease has made sad havoc here among the poor soldiers, officers and men, though the visitation of the cholera has been nothing like so severe as on board some of the ships, where the mortality was frightful. The old and delicate are fast returning to their homes, yielding up their places to men better fitted for the hard work of a campaign."

"August 24th, noon.—I took pen and paper in hand this morning to have a gossip, but they reported my boat manned, and off I went at 6 o'clock. I never had so much work for the head as I have now; I little thought that the half-pay drill at "station-bill"* would ever lead to my being selected to arrange not only the daily work of a considerable squadron, but to plan the embarkation of the largest army England has moved. I have organized dock-yard with police, master attendant, smitheries, etc.; a beach force under a captain to superintend the work on shore; the service afloat under another captain with his staff of officers, boats, etc.; and now I am called upon to plan the disembarkation of the entire army. I was asked at a conference, half an hour ago, if I could do it. I said I thought I could, because I feel as though I could. I qualified my reply by adding that I would draw up the plan and lay it before the authorities. I have just been in to Sir Edmund to ask him to excuse my making any trifling reports for a little time. He says, "It comes to this, I'll be d——d if

* Alluding to a period spent on half-pay, when he had amused himself drawing up and arranging all the details of "station-bills" for the largest ships, in which my mother helped him.

there is anybody else but you ; if anything should lay you up nothing will be done, therefore do nothing for anybody whilst you are so employed, unless I specially send for you.

"I know I have taken a very great responsibility, but I think I am equal to it. All the world will know while I write this that our object is the Crimea, and there the army will be landed to invest Sebastopol—a goal worthy of it. Sir Edmund is charged with the conduct of the expedition, and longs for it ; it could not be in better hands. The idea of it has restored animation amongst the men, who were pining for work and fancied they had been sent to die in this wretched country without meeting an enemy. I fear I must not undertake for the present to execute any private commissions. My brain is pretty well filled, as you may suppose.

"The mail goes down to-night and carries many passengers who are retiring from the trying work of a campaign. Sickness has overtaken many, death also many, old age not a few. Many ought never to have left home. I am thrown a good deal with Lord Raglan and Sir George Brown in all these matters ; the former is mild, amiable, and firm, the latter a very capable soldier, clear-headed and very firm, but somewhat uncouth or brusque in his manner ; not to me, but to his own officers. The troops are greatly inspirited at the prospect of a move ; scarcely a sound was heard in the camp a few days ago, and now all is mirth and jollity. You must not be surprised if I repeat things in my letters twice, for in spite of my desire to be quiet, I am perpetually interrupted, and everything is important, with very few heads to do all. I fancy the plot thickens around poor Admiral —, who commits so many gross blunders that the Admiralty will be unable to submit patiently. . . . I am thankful to say that the pestilence seems wearing off, it has had many victims. There are scarcely any new cases. All the ships here are healthy ; may the Almighty grant us a continuance of it. The excitement of work does good."

"*Varna, August 26th, 1854.*—My last, closed the day before yesterday, will tell you my occupation: the task is herculean and my brain swims with details of so vast an undertaking. I have read my first sheets to Sir Edmund, who remarked that I must have devoted much thought to the subject to be able to go into it so readily. I have commenced this to refresh the brain and take off my thoughts altogether for a time. . . .

"Sir Edmund reminds me of all I have heard and read of Lord Nelson. This expedition engrosses all his thoughts; he goes to bed at eleven, is up at five; sees everybody; inspires everybody with spirit and zeal; looks into everything, considers nothing too minute or beneath his attention; studies the feelings of masters of transports, the old lieutenants who are doing duty as agents, and all subordinates. . . .

"One of our marines who was employed yesterday on board a transport hoisting in guns and horses chose to get some spirit, which in all probability was bad. He was seized in the night with cholera, and will be buried in two hours hence. Nothing seems to startle them; another was much worse in point of drunkenness, and he will probably die.

"The admirals and generals have held a conference to-day to decide on matters. 'Terrible,' whilst reconnoitring Sebastopol a few days ago, touched the ground, going $10\frac{1}{2}$ knots in chase of a vessel, but happily passed over the shoal, which has been a providential warning to us all, as its existence was not known; in fact, it is thought by some that vessels have been sunk on purpose."

"*Tuesday, August 29th.*—Having nearly worked out my plan of operations, and set clerks at work to do the mechanical part of it, I am able to come to you. . . . My head has never been so taxed as on this occasion. The providing for the disembarkation, in the face probably of an enemy, of 25,000 men, the arrangements for anchoring the

fleet, the plan to get the troops, guns, horses, everything disembarked as rapidly as is required, is an undertaking of no ordinary nature. I scarcely weighed the whole when I volunteered first, but having done so I will do my best. Fortunate for me that I made a station-bill of so perfect an order as that of old 'Vengeance'; it enables me to grasp at a whole when most men despair of doing so. Sir Edmund constantly says, 'I'm so much obliged for what you are doing.' It engrosses, as you may suppose, my whole time and nearly all my thoughts. Yesterday my head got so hot, and I was so bewildered with the hammering, boats' wants, etc., that I was obliged to give it up and go on deck. . . .

"Six thousand men were embarked this morning, and I believe the embarkation still goes on. Some of the noisy declaimers were going on last evening, and —— particularly so, against the possibility of embarking 10,000 in a day. I said it provoked me to hear it, as I was satisfied I could embark 20,000 in a day. The 'Vengeance' is here to assist; she arrived yesterday with the 'Terrible.' . . . Admiral Bruat has just been on board for a long gossip; he has promised to come and take some tea with us to-night. Sir Edmund is not on board."

"*Varna, August 30th.*—The press of work fairly bewilders me,* my brain whirls in very truth with the immense amount of business I have to attend to of an important nature. Whilst the clerks are at dinner I have a little peace for an hour, and come to you to be refreshed. . . .

"Sir Edmund's brain is overtaxed, and he allows himself to be led too much into details. Finding he cannot accomplish all, he becomes impatient to a degree; but I can excuse it with so much on his head, all put upon him at the eleventh hour."

* To add to his worries at this time there was great difficulty in getting the instructions as to the details of the scheme of embarkation printed. (See Appendix VII.)

"September 2nd.—This day our gigantic expedition—the greatest the world has seen of late years—was to have sailed to the Crimea ; but we shall hardly get away before Monday, as the French cannot be quite ready before. As I told you, I was called upon to draw up a plan of the British part of it : the rendezvous, the progress of the enormous flotilla, the anchoring, and the disembarkation of the whole army. I completed it, after eight days of the hardest labour I have ever gone through, the night before last, and sent the sheets to the military press ; yesterday I was called upon to read it in manuscript to Lord Raglan, Sir Edmund Lyons, and Sir George Brown. When we were assembled in conclave in his lordship's bedroom he proposed reading it himself, which he did entirely, and wound up by saying 'that it must be printed and handed down to posterity ; it is excellent in all its parts.' And Sir G. Brown said, 'It is the best thing I have read' ; and Sir Edmund said, 'You must have given the matter much consideration.' I have taken steps now to ensure its being carried out, and God grant us success. I have not a misgiving, and trust soon to report to you that the Crimea, or rather the obnoxious part of it, is ours, and Sebastopol in ruins. General Estcourt has undertaken the printing part of it for me, and everybody says the arrangement is perfect, that nothing is uncared for. Our ships will number under sail : British, including ships of war, 52 ; ditto, steamers, 30 ; French, about 200, as they have many small vessels. The boats in line : British will number 350, and the French a like number. I land at the first landing 6000 infantry and twelve guns, and at the second a like number ; the third and fourth and fifth the same. Never was seen such a fleet of transports, the finest of England's ships and steamers. The army is now embarked with the exception of a regiment which embarks to-morrow ; all wear beards and mustachios, and are much bronzed. The mortality in the whole force is 600, which is not much in 30,000 ; and they leave about 600 men sick at hospital. Sir Edmund gets

happier as the plan of the whole approaches completion, and constantly says to me, 'I think everybody sees now that you and I work for the public service, and with no other view.' As usual I have felt nervously anxious as to the result of this gigantic undertaking, but it is no slight matter to have gained the approbation of the heads at the outset, inasmuch as it lessens materially the responsibility. They are determined to back me in it; for the result we must trust to Providence. Last night, or rather at three this morning, a fire broke out on board a steamer. I flew on deck, and to my amazement the boats were away in eleven minutes, with engine, fire-buckets, etc. Fortunately they extinguished it immediately, and the services were not needed, but I gave them great commendation, and Sir Edmund has told me he was delighted at the alacrity displayed. Yesterday we had one of Lord George's grand displays, the Duke of Cambridge, Lord Raglan, and some of the brigadiers. To-day Sir Edmund gives the duke a dinner, and we have a large party. Admiral Stopford has arrived, etc. . . ."

"*Sunday, September 3rd, 7 a.m.*—Not a day of rest to us, as we hope to complete the embarkation to-night; only one regiment of infantry and one of cavalry remain, so that there will be no difficulty. We had a pleasant dinner, and after it little Lord —, who is the veriest little popinjay in the world, got such a dressing from Sir Edmund that I fancy his night's rest was a little spoilt; it will do him good, for the narrowness of his views is unbearable when the public service is the matter he has to manage. . . .

"Sir Edmund joyfully says in my ear, occasionally, 'We shall have an opportunity of distinguishing ourselves this year yet.'

"*10 o'clock.*—The commander-in-chief has come down in the 'Furious' to look to matters at the eleventh hour, and possibly may make some crash in our plans; but Sir Edmund will keep us straight, I think.

"4 *p.m.*—I am become a perfect secretary, my pen is scarcely ever out of my hand, and great events are pending at its point—God send us success! I never cease to pray for wisdom in all I am undertaking.

"Sir George Brown embarks with us this evening, and Whitmore comes with him; he is a very good fellow. I have been summoned on board the 'Furious' to see the commander-in-chief about the plan of disembarkation, which came from the press this morning. He was not particularly gracious about it; but Sir Edmund said, like a true fellow, 'It is all Mend's, sir, he has had the labouring oar,' upon which he grinned like an ogre, but said nothing."

"*September 4th.*—The rapping at the door is threefold what it was on board the 'Vanguard,' and the business as much more important, but the more I have to do, the better I seem to get through with it; my head very rarely addles completely, though if I let the dog temper loose I am lost. However, knowing that, I am careful to restrain him within due limits.

"The plans are in circulation and we are ready to start to-morrow, a fleet of 300 sail, the finest I suppose ever collected on the waters at one time. Sir Edmund has expressed himself very strongly of the meanness of the chief in this matter. I begin to think I could do well as a flag officer. I have made many friends among those who are so to our dear country. How many there are who deserve to be disowned by her!"

It will be seen that my father in his letters lays great stress upon the fact that the conception and planning out of the details of the transport and disembarkation of the Crimean expedition were entirely his own work. Sir E. Lyons had a great hatred of details, and this was essentially a work the success of which depended primarily upon most minute and careful attention being given to them. Never before—at all events in recent history—had a combined naval and military expedition of anything like this magnitude been launched

against a hostile shore. The army was singularly unprepared for any such great movement, and the complete success of this part of the undertaking depended almost entirely upon the energy and resource displayed by the sister service. Amongst many of those high in military authority it was considered an impossible and foolhardy thing to attempt to land the army on an open beach in face of a large hostile force. Such an operation was outside their ken, and it was not until my father's carefully thought-out plan, in which the position of every ship and every boat was laid down, appeared, that the possibility of success began to dawn upon them.*

I have in my possession my father's original plans, diagrams, and notes, which demonstrate the genius and energy with which he carried out the important trust confided to him by Lord Raglan and Sir E. Lyons. The scheme has long since been public property, for which reason I do not reproduce diagrams, plans, and figures, all of which are of a highly technical nature.

Occupying, as he did, a position subordinate to the chiefs of the great expedition, it is not unnatural perhaps that my father is not more generally recognized by historians of the war as the real author of this part of the undertaking, which shone out conspicuously in its success where so much was failure.

The reader must remember that the text is compiled of extracts from private letters to his wife, which at the time they were written were not intended for the public eye, and I must take this opportunity of insisting upon his extremely modest and retiring attitude where his own merits were concerned, albeit that he did not at the time, and at the close of the war, receive adequate acknowledgment for this service rankled a little in his mind.† Later in his career, however, when it was decided to establish the office of Director of Transports, justice was done him, and his claim to fill the appointment was practically unquestioned when his services in the Crimean expedition were remembered.

* It is obvious that this invasion of the Crimea depended primarily upon the assured maritime supremacy of the allies.

† The commander-in-chief never acknowledged the real authorship of the scheme for embarking, transporting, and landing the army in the Crimea, conduct which filled the chivalrous mind of Sir Edmund Lyons with indignation.

CHAPTER XII

1854

“Baljik, September 6th, 1854.—We quitted Varna yesterday morning with our part of the flotilla, and have tacked it on to that already here, forming altogether one of the most formidable fleets of war and transports combined that has ever been collected together on this or any other sea. A strong wind blows from the northward, which prevents further progress for the present, but I conclude it will not last. I was ordered by Sir Edmund to assemble the captains of all the transports on board one of the large steamers yesterday, to read and explain to them the instructions and arrangements, as well as to see read by the naval captain who is immediately over them a letter addressed to them by Sir Edmund. They responded most heartily to all I had to say, and took their hats off to a *little* cheer of applause when I ended. They are a fine set of fellows, sailors every inch of them, and educated men. I have advised Sir Edmund not to tie them down too closely with instructions, but leave much to their own skill and judgment. Here comes Whitmore to dress, so I must run away. . . .

“8.30 *a.m.*—After the work I have lately had, there seems to be a lull like a calm after a gale. I am happy to find that my “station-bill” is very generally approved of by the fraternity of captains, and commanders say nothing is wanting. In addition to the copy I sent to you, I was obliged to write for each ship the detail of her boat duties throughout the day; no slight labour, because I was compelled first to make a whole from which to glean the parts,

and little remains to be done. I hear the scheme generally praised as being clear, explicit, simple, comprehensive, embracing all that is requisite. The demand for them in all quarters has been great. Lord Raglan has drawn largely upon me, and now it remains to be worked out, and God give us success. I have not a misgiving. Sir Edmund is joyous as a boy as the great scheme goes on, but his mind has been sorely worried by want of support when he should have met with hearty co-operation. He is not a little put out at the shabby manner with which the plan has been received by the commander-in-chief. Our arrival here has set things on the move, and inspired the fleet with confidence. Cases of cholera still occur here and there, though to all appearance the climate is perfect. We do our best to ward it off, but it is so very difficult to impress the men with the necessity for being prudent in their diet or making instant application to the surgeon when the first symptoms set in.

"I am writing in snatches to you as I am allowed minutes to myself. . . .

"I understand Sir Edmund intends enclosing a copy of the plan of landing to Sir James Graham, and I hear another is gone to the club, so you may after a little time show the one I have sent you without fear. . . .

"7.30 *p.m.*—The breeze has died away completely; the moon looks full, bright, and clear, and to-morrow morning we start, if the chief* can *discover* nothing else to retard us. Our hearts are nigh broken at being so led. We ought to have been at sea to-night; every moment lost is one never to be regained in credit. The admirals nigh came to high words to-day on the apathy that reigns. Ladies being at Constantinople are well enough if husbands and wives were sufficiently strong-minded not to allow the proximity to interfere with their duty to their country. Ladies in the field should not be permitted, pretty and romantic as is the

* The commander-in-chief.

idea of the wife following the husband through such a life, because there are times when their presence is embarrassing, and in the effort to serve the fair one a regiment might be sacrificed. . . .”

“‘*Agamemnon*,’ off *Baljik*, *September 7th*.—It is sweet to feel in one’s own heart a consciousness that we are doing our duty. It is far sweeter when we feel that it is appreciated by those over us. My good admiral put into my hands an hour since the following copy of a note that was sent off by the ‘*Banshee*’ this morning, which copy I am to keep :—

““‘*AGAMEMNON*,’ VARNA,

““‘*September 2nd*, 1854.

“‘MY DEAR SIR JAMES GRAHAM,—

“‘I am so well aware of the deep interest you take in the success of this expedition, that I think you will be glad to have the accompanying proofs that no pains have been spared in making arrangements for the disembarkation, etc. The credit of the programme is due to Captain Mends, of this ship, who is, indeed, an excellent officer. Lord Raglan is highly pleased with it after a long examination of it, together with Sir George Brown, Captain Mends, and myself; and I hope that Admiral Dundas may approve it!’

“The gist of all this is that as soon as it was completed Admiral —— laid his hands upon it as his own. So Sir Edmund said, ‘Oh, we’ll do him for such meanness *entre nous*. I am determined the saddle shall be on the right horse.’ Thus has he done it handsomely. We are all at sea, the whole force with no casualty as yet. One cannot fail to be proud of Britain when we look at it. It is now eleven. I have been at it since half-past three this morning.

“9 *p.m.*—A fair wind, a lovely night, the whole fleet—130 sail—progressing steadily onwards. Sir Edmund as happy as a boy. I have had much conversation with him to-day; he begins to adopt my advice in much, I mean with respect to the detail; his mind is occupied with the great feature of things which it so readily grapples with; he has a great mind

seldom met with in these days; kind to a degree, but the very d——l when roused by neglect or ignorance of duty in others. I said to him to-day, 'These are not times to stick to the letter, if the spirit of the service suffers thereby.' He said, 'Oh, no; officers may do anything they please if it be but for the good of the service, and I see they have the service at heart. . . .'

"*September 8th, daylight.*—Having seen that the squadrons are all right—I mean *fleets*, for such they really are, and large ones too—I come for a little chat with you.

"*7 o'clock.*—I had hardly got so far when Sir Edmund sent for me to arrange about the commanders on the expedition. Hillyar superintends, under Captain King of the 'Leander,' the landing of the artillery. . . .

"We shall have done half the distance by noon to-day, thanks to a favouring breeze all night; the most difficult half will then be accomplished, the difficulty being getting to the northward sufficiently far to enable us to fetch the Crimea if the wind heads, which it will assuredly do. The 'Bellerophon' is fast to us with some portion of the Guards on board; 'Sanspareil' is also of our immediate squadron, followed by 'Leander' and 'Diamond,' several of the steamers attached to us being engaged in towing transports. I will send you in my next a paper of the order of sailing and anchoring, which will give you a good idea of the whole. . . .

"We have had a capital night, and have Sebastopol to leeward of us. 'Agamemnon,' accompanied by the 'Caradoc,' with Lord Raglan on board, the 'Sampson,' and a French screw are *en route* for the coast of the Crimea to clear the way and make reconnaissance before the force approaches. I suppose we shall get there by to-morrow's dawn. The generals and admirals had a long conference last night, from which Sir Edmund did not return to dinner until nearly

eight o'clock, when we were famishing. I believe there are voices still raised against this expedition in high quarters, but the heads, Lord Raglan and Sir Edmund, are still *firm* for it. We have three huge boats triced up outside on each side to make flats for landing artillery; two of them are put together side by side, well secured, and a deck which we carry ready is laid over them; on this we can carry twenty-one horses or two guns and fourteen horses. The barometer is slowly but steadily rising, which indicates settled weather, so that all things are propitious. We were joined by the French and Turkish fleets yesterday. When all were together, I sent a man aloft to count them; he told off 412 vessels. I am very anxious that they should pass slowly before Sebastopol before we effect a landing. I am satisfied that the effect would not be inspiring to the Russian soldiers, who cannot fail to see the whole from such an amphitheatre. I have only had my clothes off for an hour during the night; moving about among so many ships is anxious work. Sir Edmund throws the whole thing off and goes to sleep like a child; so will I when my flag flies and I get a fellow to *do* the work. . . .

"Sir Edmund has just gone on board the 'Caradoc' to talk over matters with Lord Raglan, and I have had my cot hung up to take forty winks, as I am tired, and shall probably have an anxious night again."

"*Sunday, September 9th, 2 a.m.*—We are in all the excitement of our reconnaissance, stealing in upon the enemy. The admiral and Sir G. Brown are with Lord Raglan in the 'Caradoc' ahead, the 'Sampson' follows her, and I bring up the rear. About four the 'Caradoc' will dash off at full speed to be close in by daybreak, not upon the harbour, but the beach on which it is contemplated to land the armies. The generals are anxious to see what preparations, if any, have been made to receive them. I scarcely think that any opposition will be made. They will await us behind their

walls or entrenchments. Some people think they will resist the landing ; if they attempt it they will be much beaten, as the army will, in the first place, be landed under the cover of the ships' fire ; secondly, our line will cover such an extent of coast that their flanks will be turned. Then if it should be decided to divide the landing into two, the French at one place whilst we land at another, they will be sorely puzzled ; in fact, with steam power a landing ought to be effected where and as we please. We have completely changed our climate from summer to autumn at once ; I have on my thick winter trousers, cotton drawers, warm necktie, monkey-jacket, and gloves. I trust it will invigorate the men, and help all to throw off the poisonous influence of that pestilential place, Varna. The spirits of the men have been much damped at seeing so many of their comrades laid low by this mysterious disease, the cholera, which it has hardly yet been permitted man to grapple with successfully. We have had a few fatal cases, but as compared to other ships, we have been mercifully spared.

"We have three Indian officers on board, amateurs ; one left Bombay on sick leave scarcely six weeks ago, and turned his steps hither to this scene of excitement. The French cannot comprehend such philanthropy, or the Englishman's love of being fired at.

"10.30 *a.m.*—We have been close off the harbour of Sebastopol and have coasted along to the northward since, very close to the shore, so close that we see the troops riding about from one camp to another ; can count the guns they have, and make tolerably accurate calculations as to the number. The boats are away from the 'Caradoc' sounding. A fast steamer came out a short time ago, took a look at us, and went back again. The weather is most beautiful."

"*Monday, 6 a.m.*—The reconnaissance was completed to the satisfaction of all who are put over us to judge ; a place

was fixed upon to disembark the army, a little away from all others where preparations had been made, and we quitted the coast at seven in the evening for the fleet, part of which are now in sight on the rendezvous. The country looked beautiful yesterday; corn and hay were still being carried to the farms. The valleys teem with verdure, cattle abound over the whole plain. If war must be, it looked a desirable field for it; from our mastheads we can tell every movement of the enemy, as we look completely down upon it. Several towers are in progress to protect the roads, but they are only half finished, and cannot, as Sir G. Brown says, be available this war. They seem to have a great many troops; so have we, with heads as well as hearts. I have earnestly entreated that the whole of our flotilla be towed by steamers slowly across the harbour's mouth, in order that the Russian army may see from their splendid theatre the grand display on the stage before them. I am sure the nervous system will not be *quieted* by it, it will magnify the host so much in the minds of the ignorant as to shake their confidence. Sir Edmund is of my opinion and intends to moot it at the meeting to-day, the last, I conclude, before action. When Sir Edmund returned last night he was like a pleased schoolboy, tired out with the day's excitement, and so sleepy that his head nigh fell into his pudding-plate."

"*Tuesday, 10 a.m.*—Shortly after joining the fleets yesterday the whole weighed, following our example; the first away, we are now off Cape Tarkan, the western cape of the Crimea, standing in for Kalamita Bay, or Eupatoria. I am sorry to say that my worthy admiral is so poorly as to be obliged to keep his cot, though I fancy he is doing so as much to lay in a stock of rest as for any other reason. Our convoy is in tolerably compact order, but our allies are far off; I fear they were scattered by a squall which overtook us in the night. Poor Sir Edmund is very impatient when in a little difficulty; he has ever been so fortunate a man that he



feels keenly the smallest obstacle to his onward course, which is very remarkable in an otherwise great mind. I have not slept out of my clothes for two nights, nor do I expect to do so for many more; but what a comparatively comfortable life is ours during war to that of the poor soldier; he certainly has to rough it.

"*Noon.*—We have just rounded-to with our superb fleet to wait for the French, only one ship of their flotilla being visible. It is a goodly sight for English eyes to see us arrived at this point, a few miles only from the anchorage, and scarcely a casualty. Surely there ever is a protecting hand stretched out over our dear country, and how ill do we deserve it! I have not told you that Mr. Layard is with us, the Nineveh Layard. . . ."

"*September 12th, 6.30 a.m.*—Nearly all under weigh standing in for Kalamita Bay. . . . We muster near 400 sail. I think the man who set this agoing now commands at Sebastopol; it will assist his digestion if he sees the array about breakfast time. Mentschikoff is the man. Weather promises well, and all hearts are ready.

"*4 p.m.*—Instead of taking up the position for landing we have taken a strategic one at Eupatoria for the night. I fancy some troops will be landed here to take possession when plenty stares us in the face, and that we shall proceed to the settled plan to-morrow morning. Opportunity for letters this evening. We are still under weigh in this ship. Sir Edmund away at a conference."

"*Crimea. September 15th, 1854. The army landed.*—I scarcely recollect when I last wrote, but I think it was on the night before landing. Yesterday at 1 a.m. we weighed from Eupatoria, twelve miles north of this, and led the whole flotilla down. We took 'Agamemnon' into five fathoms, and soon became the focus of attraction of our great fleet. We

anchored at dawn, and in an hour the disembarkation commenced. No enemy appeared; a few mounted police showed themselves, and an officer took a conspicuous post to observe our movements and write a despatch, which we observed him send off. He lingered long, but when the descent was being made took to his heels, not however without making the attempt to drive off some cattle, doing which called down the attention of our rifles who were thrown out, but a shot from one unluckily laid low one of the poor drivers instead of the officer, who took to his heels forthwith. The man was not killed, but wounded in the foot. By 4 p.m. about 20,000 men were landed by the British, and I think a like number from the French. At nightfall all the infantry and twenty-eight guns were on shore. The weather became disagreeable; a heavy swell set in upon the beach, and quantities of rain fell during the night. Our flats and pontoons suffered in consequence. Horses were swimming about at midnight. A French artillery horse was actually picked up by one of our transports at least a mile from the boat he had left. Notwithstanding this, I have heard of the loss of only one or two of ours. The swell has continued to-day, but the weather is fine. Cavalry and artillery are landing rapidly. I suppose so many men were never landed in the same time. The fleet as it approached the coast must have had a very extraordinary appearance. Sir G. Brown said it gave him the idea of Manchester on the move, the cloud of smoke was so great and the line so enormous. They will advance upon Sebastopol almost immediately. Unassisted as we have been by our *head*, it has been wonderfully done. Lord Raglan told Sir Edmund to say how gratified he was with all my arrangements, which, in spite of every support wanting when I had reason to look for it, had caused a successful landing. I hope we shall now move down the coast to co-operate. I want them to send all the empty steamers down the coast to the south and east to create a diversion, as the enemy would take it to be a second landing in that direction. . . ."

"*Saturday, September 16th.*—I had a sad nervous headache from over-anxiety and an empty stomach yesterday ; dinner removed it, but at nine I fell asleep like a stone, completely fagged out. I got up to look at a fire which the officer of the watch imagined to be a ship, which proved to be a fire in the French camp. This was a cruel wake up at midnight, but I did not blame him, and in ten minutes was off again. I have a great idea that something very serious will come of the extraordinary lack of energy displayed in high quarters. It has nearly killed Sir Edmund, who is so keenly alive to his country's honour.

"Lord Raglan and the general officers have asked home questions and commented severely on the indifference shown with regard to the success of the expedition. If you can believe it, the chief* has not yet been near the shore, or in any way participated in the great undertaking. Several prisoners were taken yesterday. Supplies are abundant and excellent ; forage abounds for the horses ; the inhabitants receive us with open arms, and do everything that is required of them most cheerfully. Our troops are in high spirits, and long to meet the enemy to get over the toils of the campaign. At Eupatoria we find full granaries, in fact they do not seem to have thought us in earnest up to this hour. We are hard at it still, landing artillery, cavalry, and provisions. The weather continues beautiful. The formation and advance of the Light Division, with the Rifles thrown out in advance after landing, was very fine. It was soon followed by the Scotch Brigade and the Guards under the Duke of Cambridge. Sir Edmund went away at five this morning to the beach. I have only one lieutenant on board and the master. All boats and about 200 men away. I have not time for more. It will be a great thing to know in England that the landing, was unopposed. We are certainly favoured in our weather. We will hope that our arms will be equally favoured before the enemy. . . ."

* Admiral Dundas.

"*September 16th, 1 p.m.*—We see from our decks the advance of some of our cavalry, a portion of the Rifle Brigade, and two guns of the Horse Artillery to the east in the direction of Simferopol; others are driving in cattle, others arresting the path of araba drivers. A troop of Spahis in their picturesque Arab costume has just gone by, driving a number of cattle into their camp. I fear the French are very unscrupulous, and plunder a great deal. Lord Raglan has mentioned to St. Arnaud the necessity of stopping it, or supplies will not be easily procured. What an exacting life it is! Very enjoyable after all. Now comes the advance, and we shall, I hope, co-operate as well as witness the onward progress of the army; they hope to be able to march by to-morrow night, which will not be bad work. No one can tell of the quantities of things required by an army taking the field, it is something wonderful to witness! Ages cannot give experience in such matters. I would undertake the arrangement now of any army, give me but the time. I have seen many faults in my plan that I have not heard mentioned, yet I can rectify them easily, and will do so some day.

"Sir Edmund has just informed me of the telegraphic message sent by Lord Raglan announcing the landing, which, in spite of obstacles, has been effected in a very short time under the immediate command of Rear-Admiral Sir E. Lyons. What will be thought of the omission of the name of the *head*!"

"*Sunday, September 17th.*—A little swell still keeps up on the beach, which much retards the operation of landing guns, horses, etc. Great exertions on the part of the seamen have overcome most obstacles, and they work from morning to night up to their necks on the beach dragging the guns through the surf; fifty have been put on shore, and others are now going. We have been at it since three o'clock, it is now six. Sir Edmund is gone to the beach to expedite

matters. It is considered very strange that no resistance has been made, and that no enemy has shown. All the prisoners taken say the force in the Crimea does not exceed 50,000 men.

"A postmaster, wife, and child, *en route* to Sebastopol, have been taken with letters; they are able to give much information. We hope the armies will be able to advance to-morrow morning. The 'Banshee' is to go down to-morrow with our mail bags. Many a heart beats anxiously for the first news of landing, which was expected to be attended with loss. Thank God there was none. I feel sure we shall soon be in possession of Sebastopol, and send forth a bulletin to astonish Europe. The landing here will be somewhat startling I fancy. It has never been really expected. We have a great many amateurs in the fleet, the greatest lions being the conductor of the *Times* and Mr. Layard; the latter being conversant with the language is of immense use to the expedition, and has gained much valuable information for the army. The Zouaves, French troops, have, I regret to say, committed sad depredations, which will alienate the inhabitants and bring discredit on our arms if some of them be not shot immediately. I should give them a drumhead investigation, and if found guilty, shoot them at once; it is the only way to ensure obedience from such fellows. . . ."

"*September 18th, 3.30 a.m.*—The army advance to-day, as water is not easily procured where they now are; they are only twenty-eight miles from Sebastopol. A portion of the French fleet left for Varna yesterday to bring up more troops. We have sent for more cavalry. It was a wonderful sight yesterday to witness on a line of beach a mile long about a thousand seamen landing, through a considerable surf, horses, guns, carriages, carts, provisions, ammunition, shot, and shell—some next to naked working up to their necks. We hope to have everything on shore by noon to-day; the men have worked like demons. . . ."

"I have just seen my working parties off and shall lie down for half an hour.

"9 a.m.—The army can now advance and will move probably to-day or very early to-morrow. The coming fortnight will disclose much that is important. We shall be tolerably close to the shore aiding the advance. I hope you see the papers; the *Times* is, I suppose, the best in all very important matters. Our reconnoitring ships report the desertion of Sebastopol almost entirely, that scarcely a human being is to be seen, that the troops have come forward to a position on this side, where a river called the Alma runs into the sea. It is very pretty; its beauties will soon be destroyed by the advancing hosts, and most likely a battle fought on its banks. . . . Mr. Layard is waiting to write at my table. . . ."

"*Old Fort, twenty miles north of Sebastopol, September 19th, 6 a.m.*—This is the first time for many a day that my duties have taken their regular course. For six weeks mind and body have been fully occupied preparing for and carrying out this gigantic expedition. The disembarkation was considered complete at noon yesterday. None but the experienced can have an idea of the labour attending the landing of such an army with its material complete; we have put on shore since Thursday last, through a heavy surf, 30,000 men, 60 guns, 3000 horses, carts, reserve ammunition, about 60 tons, and provisions for the whole force, including forage for the horses. For one mile of beach the seamen have been working up to their necks like demons, but full of fun through it all until exhausted. I landed yesterday afternoon and walked out a couple of miles to see the great array of 70,000 men, stretching as far as the eye could see on hill and dale; it was a wonderful sight, and the detail most singular. The contrast between the old campaigner and the new; their devices for cooking; the difficulty of

procuring water; the general cheerfulness of the whole; indeed their boundless spirits at the idea of moving on to the enemy this morning. Their tents were struck at four o'clock and re-embarked, nor are they to have them again before they are in the trenches before Sebastopol. They have merely their blankets, great coats, and canteens. Then comes the dark side of the picture—the sick and the dying; many were brought to the beach on stretchers very ill and laid on the sand, awaiting their turn to be carried through a troublesome surf to the depôt ships; some were near dissolution, and yet the whole thing was going on as if it were an everyday occurrence. I do not think it the least creditable part of our operations that we have disembarked this great force twice* without the loss of a man or any serious accident, and have only lost fifteen or twenty pack-horses. The very hard, continuous work done by this ship begins to tell upon our men; six or seven have fallen victims to cholera, but I am full of hope that the rest they will now get and the more agreeable excitement of warlike operations will restore them. We all weigh this morning to proceed in the direction of Sebastopol, accompanying the advance of the army and protecting their flank. The French are next to the sea, and ours on their left.

“9.30 *p.m.*—The allied armies advanced at six this morning. We weighed soon after, and kept along shore with our little squadron. The burning of forage and stacks of corn in the east showed that the enemy was on the *qui vive*, but on went the armies. Undisputed possession was taken of a large village only partially burnt. The French troops passed through it. On arriving at the crest of a ridge the Russian army was discovered in motion on an opposite one. I stationed myself at the maintop-masthead, and had a clear view of the operations. Masses of horse artillery

* Once before at Varna.

and cavalry came forward from the Russian lines at speed to make an attack upon the advance of our horse artillery and cavalry.* It was a pretty sight to see them form and come forward at a gallop. When near they opened fire, but were received so warmly that they made a precipitate retreat, leaving a few of their comrades on the field, laid low by shrapnel or rifle. Many horses returned without riders, and one strayed down close to the beach, apparently wounded, where he was at dark. Our men advanced steadily; the Russians recrossed the River Alma to their entrenchment; and now the camp fires burn brilliantly in front of each other, many a heart beating with anxiety for the results of the morrow. We are at anchor very close, with our little squadron inshore of us. . . .”

“*September 21st.*—We have had a bloody battle, but a great victory. The passage of the Alma was effected on Wednesday afternoon. The Russians held a very strong position on the left bank, so strong that it seemed almost impossible to turn them out. The armies advanced at noon, and were soon engaged. We saw the advance of the whole line of the 70,000, in spite of artillery and dense masses of infantry covered by cavalry. The Zouaves mounted the hill near the sea, on the Russian left. Our troops advanced upon the masses, charged up the hill, drove them from their guns, and in two hours the Russian hosts were scattered like dry leaves before an autumnal wind. The passage of the Alma will be recorded in history. The British loss in killed and wounded is about 2000, the French 1500. Many officers have fallen. Our men captured three guns, two generals, and many junior officers on the battle field.

“*1.30 p.m.*—Since I began this we have been under weigh, because it was reported that three ships had quitted Sebastopol in tow of steamers in the night. The steamers

* The cavalry affair on the heights of Bulganak.



THE FIRST GUN, BULGANAK.

From a drawing by W. Simpson, Esq. Messrs. Colnaghi & Co.

93 1000
A. 1000.00

sent to inquire the truth of this say all the ships are in port but have changed their positions, and we are again at anchor. Now I will go back to Wednesday. From our mastheads we witnessed the whole action. We commenced the attack on the heights with about 60,000; the heights were defended by about 60,000 with a hundred guns in position. We could see the gaps in the French and English ranks as the shot and shell and grape poured through them. On went the columns up the heights, closing in as vacancies were made. The 23rd Regiment stormed and carried the battery gallantly, led by their noble Colonel Chester, who with 11 officers and 250 rank and file fell dead in the struggle. Soon the Russian artillery became fainter and fainter, and on came the Highland Brigade upon the great masses of Russians formed in squares of close columns. A rolling fire soon broke their ranks. A charge, headed by that gallant soldier Sir Colin Campbell, was made upon their masses, and in an instant, like leaves taken by the whirlwind, the masses broke asunder, and the whole hillsides and valleys filled with the flying Muscovites. The Horse Artillery now mounted the hill and galloped forward, opening as it advanced a deadly fire upon the retreating host. Thus far of the British—our gallant, noble-hearted, lion-hearted countrymen. Now for our gallant allies. The rapid ascent of the Zouaves up the almost precipitous hillside to the edge of the height was wonderful and beautiful—50 at first, then 100, and soon artillery was opened upon them, but they stood their ground and rolled over the Russians so rapidly with their deadly fire that their advance was soon checked and a retreat commenced. We saw friends falling fast but Russians faster, until they were out of sight. When they had gone far back I landed with Moore and Cleeve, and ran over part of the battlefield—a bloody field, indeed, for friends, but we had only time to visit the

French portion of it, as our army was far on the left and night approached. The heights were carried, and all firing had ceased in two and a half hours from the commencement. The field was strewed with dead, wounded, and dying—animals as well as men. Where the Russians made a stand round a small fort against the French, the dead and wounded were so thick that you were obliged to pick your way, and step over them. A horrid scene, and scarcely attention bestowed on any. Horrid as the sight was, I cannot account for my feelings, not callous certainly, but viewing all as the natural result of such a fight. I am told by everybody that for miles the Russian corpses cover the land, and the estimate up to the present return of the buried is four Russians to one English or French. We have a Russian general officer on board, he lives with Sir Edmund. Another, with his son, both wounded, are gone to Constantinople in the 'Vulcan.' A great many young officers who are wounded are prisoners, and hundreds of poor Russian troops. I undertook yesterday the duties of the beach to embark the wounded—a sad duty, for frightful were the scenes. At nightfall we had filled the 'Vulcan,' a larger steamer called the 'Andes,' and partly another, the 'Colombo.' The poor fellows were brought down in every imaginable contrivance to afford them comfort. We landed hundreds of men with hammocks slung on poles, and brought them down in that way until dark stopped us. Some died by the way, some on the beach, some in the boats—sad, sad, scene! At night we got up fires, erected tents, and did our best; but the din, the mixture of languages, the groans, the calm resignation of some, the extended hand and open mouth for a drop of water, the contented remarks of many, are all subjects for after reflection. I remained on the beach with them all until nine, when I was fagged out, as I landed very early. I kept a basket going all day with brandy and water, bread and cheese, etc., for

the hard-worked. I sent a man from each mess at dawn this morning with hot tea, hot cocoa, biscuit, etc. It was delightful to see the gratitude on their faces—friend and foe alike—for we have embarked many from the Russians with our men, and sent them off to the great hospital at Scutari. I was ashore by six, and the scene surpassed that of yesterday, but I will not harrow your feelings by describing it. Sir G. Brown is now on board, who led on the light division which bore the brunt of the day. He is shipping off to sick quarters a favourite horse that carried him through the day, though he received six musket balls in him, Sir George himself being untouched. Two of his aides had their horses shot by round shot, my late guest, Whitmore, being one of them. We hear the Russians have retreated directly into Sebastopol, and by a movement amongst the shipping they seem to be alarmed. Prince Mentschikoff commanded in person; his carriage was taken by the French, and so hastily was it quitted by him that all his despatches were in it, *i.e.*, in his valise, which was left in the carriage. A letter addressed to the Emperor—telling him of the expected attack by the allies, and that he was in so strong a position that he would hold it *three weeks* against the best troops in the world—was found not sealed. Alas for his vanity, it was carried in two hours, and his host driven before the wind. Many letters received by him apparently that day, unopened, telling him of an expedition and giving him a full account of our force with the names of our generals. Sir G. Brown says that he has never heard of a battlefield or seen one so thickly covered with dead as this.”

“*Saturday, September 23rd.*—After I left you yesterday I landed with Cleeve to visit the scene of the late action on the British part of it. All the dead have been buried, the English wounded removed on board ship. The Russian wounded were laid together in two huge masses, from

whence the fatigue parties were removing them to the so-called hospital for dressing and amputation, the said hospital being a very miserable shed on a mound in the village. The capture of the Russian position in the face of such a deadly fire from seventy pieces of artillery is considered by the experienced in war to be one of the most gallant exploits ever performed.

“Many are the acts of heroism told of individuals: a Colonel Bradford of the Guards, who was suffering so much from rheumatism that he was unable to draw his sword, hobbled along with a walking-stick with his men. Lord Raglan rode up the centre and was miraculously preserved; some of his staff fell, and three of their horses in the showers of grape. Sir G. Brown’s horse has seven musket wounds in his chest, and has carried off three of the balls; we shipped him off to Constantinople yesterday to be cured. When Lord Raglan reached the Scotch Brigade and thanked them for their noble exertions, Sir Colin Campbell said, ‘I have one favour to ask of your Excellency.’ ‘What is it?’ ‘That I may wear a Scotch bonnet instead of this cocked hat and plume,’ which he held in his hand; so yesterday Lord Raglan rode again through the ranks, and when he arrived at the Scotch Brigade, Sir Colin received him as usual. Lord Raglan said, ‘You asked me a favour yesterday; now I have one to ask of you.’ ‘What may that be?’ replied the brigadier. ‘To give me permission to present you with a bonnet’—which was done; whereupon the whole brigade gave such a cheer as to make the earth shake. The armies advance this morning towards Sebastopol, where a wholesome terror prevails. The fleet has moved nearer the entrance to block it up completely. However, we will have Sebastopol in spite of them. Many Polish officers have been taken, and we know from them that many high in rank fell; in fact, the blustering Prince Mentschikoff was as nearly captured as possible, some of the prisoners declare he ran

as hard as he could ; certainly never was such a flight. I think I already told you that I embarked the guns the night before last ; they are to be sent to Malta. 500 of the Russian wounded are to be sent to Odessa immediately. Some of them have nice countenances, some very bad. Those engaged with our men were fine, able-bodied fellows, those engaged with the French were a much smaller race.

“ 3 o'clock.—We move on with the army at noon.”

CHAPTER XIII

1854

“Off the Katchka River, 6 miles north of Sebastopol, Saturday night, September 23rd.—Just before quitting our last anchorage a deserter from Sebastopol (a Pole) came wandering along the beach and gave himself up to Captain Dacres, who at the moment was on duty ; he gave a full account of the effect of the defeat of their army : the desperate panic that had been created, that 16,000 of the army opposed to us were killed, wounded, and dispersed, never having returned to the fortress ; that the ships had been removed to the mouth of the harbour, prepared to be sunk the moment we advanced ; that the whole force had been engaged with us, and only 2,000 men left at the time in the forts. This information, with much else of considerable importance, he honestly and plainly imparted, expressing his hatred of the Russians. Though a private, his intelligence was great. We weighed at noon. The armies advanced at seven, and as soon as it was known in Sebastopol, the ships at the entrance were observed to be going down by our look-out ships, thus far confirming accurately the Pole’s statement. *Six* ships of the line have been sunk ; thus are they playing our game by releasing the strength of our fleet. We are to advance close up in the morning and take up position, when the men will be given their tents ; at this moment they have only their great-coats and blankets. We landed a fresh regiment, the 57th, this evening, and part of a magnificent regiment—the celebrated Scots Greys—are on shore, but being cavalry, we could not proceed with the work after dark. Our next

business is to land the artillery of the siege-train, which is to be done at the next bay within sight of Sebastopol, and just now out of range of their guns. I have had some talk with Sir Edmund on the whole affair, which has been entirely his, and he has just told me in the following terms: 'Mends, I could not have done it without you; not only have I had your zeal, but your head. I must have given it up but for you!' This is kind and generous, the expression of a noble heart from a great mind that can afford to give each person his due. . . .

"The guns of Sebastopol have been trying their range on the reconnoitring steamers this evening, and enlivening the camp with their music."

"*Agamemnon*, off the *Katchka River*, September 24th, 1854.—The sight of the wounded Russians entering Sebastopol and the crowded state of the hospitals are not encouraging facts. Providence seems to have been with us, for never was finer weather. Mentschikoff wept over his defeat. I hope he will soon have to weep over the fall of Sebastopol. He ran from the field in the day of battle, the bombastic rascal!

"11 a.m.—Our look-out ships exchange occasional shots with the forts. Sebastopol is full in view, and the allied armies marching upon it. We hear from the Pole that Anapa* is burnt; if it be true, Circassia is open. I believe it, as it gives them available troops for the defence; but we shall perhaps turn it, and make our attack on the south side after all, which will somewhat embarrass their tactics, as great labour has been bestowed upon the defence of this side. I hope now that a naval brigade will be formed to work heavy guns, as the ships are rendered useless. All this will create great sensation in England and Europe. The Scots Greys are landed—a magnificent body of men and horses. The French are loud in their praise; thousands have been down

* A port on the north shore of the Black Sea to the eastward of the Straits of Kertch.

on this beautiful strand to see them. A strong feeling of brotherhood is springing up in consequence of their great victory. The weather still continues lovely. . . .

"We have been away, and are again at anchor, because the troops have gone quite round to the opposite side of Sebastopol, and we cannot see them. Sir Edmund has started off in high glee to fulfil an engagement he made with Lord Raglan to be at the beach if necessary. He will exchange shots with the forts, I think. . . ."

"*Off the Katchka River, September 25th.*—You will be sorry to hear that poor Colonel Beckwith is on board a large steamer near us in a dying state, if not dead; they sent on board last evening to say that he was not expected to live through the night. . . .

"We are on needles and pins for news from the armies, which have made a *détour* for the purpose of cutting off the head of the harbour and turning the place, as it is technically expressed, which means, I fancy, taking the strong places in the rear. This will also cut off the communication with Simferopol by taking possession of the main roads. Sharp musketry went on in the middle watch for a short time; I fancy some Russian patrols advanced too far into our men. Lord Burghersh, who is charged with the despatches, has just come down to the beach, and will be off immediately.

"Sir Edmund has had a very gratifying and delightful letter from Sir J. Graham on the expedition. The 'Royal Albert' is our ship, and he is informed that he is to succeed Admiral Dundas in the Mediterranean command. . . .

"We have had a curious scene on board this evening. Whilst I was sitting with the admiral on our return from the 'Britannia,' the officer of the watch came in and said I was wanted on the quarter-deck; when I got there, to my amazement I saw the whole ship's company, who evidently had something to say. I enquired, and a petty officer thus addressed me on their behalf: 'We have come

aft, sir, because we have heard that a steam squadron is going to attack the batteries to-morrow, that the 'Albion' is to be towed, that the admiral is going in one of the small vessels, and that we are to be left out,' which they did not like, as 'they wished to carry the admiral's flag into action and go wherever he went; that they had had all the hard work, and hoped they might share the honour.' It was nicely done and said. I assured them that there was no chance of their being left out if anything was to be done, and that I cordially agreed with them, whereupon they gave a cheer. I communicated their wishes to the admiral, who was greatly delighted, and desired me to tell them again from him what I had already said, when they gave a general cheer, and clapped their hands from one end of the ship to the other. How proud it makes one of our noble country to command such fellows! . . .

" . . . Our troops made a good march to-day towards the south, where they purpose taking their position. The Russian ships have been sunk in a violent hurry with everything on board them; powder-cases, capstan-bars, oars, carved ornaments, racks, gratings are floating past us, and may be picked up all along the shore. The panic is complete; if we had not an old Mother Hubbard at our head, we might do something. Alas! alas! for the British Navy!"

"*September 26th, evening, 10 o'clock, off Balaklava.*— We received intelligence at seven this morning that the army had made a magnificent march during the night, turned Sebastopol, and were within four miles of this curious little landlocked harbour. We instantly weighed, accompanied by our flotilla of ships carrying provisions, tents, etc. As we ran along under the high land, we observed troops, peasants, women, and children flying over the hills with their bundles lashed to their backs, some carrying two or three muskets. Just as we got off the

port we descried the rifles coming over the heights. Several Russian troops were about an old Genoese fort in a position of considerable strength. As our riflemen advanced down the hill, these Russians commenced firing upon them from behind stone walls and other cover, forgetting that their backs were towards us. Soon we heard the guns of our artillery open upon their lodgments, and as their rear was exposed to us we gave them a few shot, whereupon they displayed several flags of truce. Sir Edmund, much to my delight, sent me* on shore to communicate with Lord Raglan. On entering the little harbour, which is bounded by high, rugged hills, on which stood our rifles and the light companies of two other regiments, they gave us a hearty cheer. It was a most interesting sight. Lord Raglan and staff were arrived, and arriving, after a twelve hours' march; the troops were bringing in the prisoners, the arms were being collected, and the poor women, frightened out of their wits, were being brought to Lord Raglan to be reassured that no harm would befall them. Revolvers were in use to supply the pot from the groups of fowls, ducks, geese, and turkeys that had been left by the villagers in the hurry of their departure. After my conversation with Lord Raglan and the staff I repaired to my ship and Sir Edmund landed. We sent in several steamers immediately with provisions, tents, etc., and purpose, if there be room to turn, going in ourselves to-morrow. . . .

"The army on its night march crossed a large division of the Russian army in retreat from Sebastopol, opened fire upon them, divided them into two masses, who went pell-mell right and left, casting away packs, arms, baggage, everything in their flight. Our men loaded themselves with all kinds of valuables, silks, furs, generals' orders, etc. One

* My father, therefore, had the honour to be the first naval officer to enter Balaklava on this celebrated occasion. (See Appendix VIII.)

very fine carriage with a grandee was all but cut off; he owes his escape to his horses and postillions; at the latter he was shaking his fists and vociferating most violently. Waggons containing all kinds of good things were captured, champagne, preserved meats, etc. In fact, it is very difficult to account for their movements or doings.* To-morrow the army takes position before the town and summons it. We saw the tops of the sunken ships at the entrance to Sebastopol as we passed before it this morning, and could make out that the enemy were carrying troops and stores from the north to the south side, the north having been prepared for the enemy, the south not so. In fact, so entirely ignorant were they of the move, that the people of Balaklava left their beds for the field to fly; in some houses the breakfast things were on the table. It is considered a very excellent piece of generalship, and has pleased the soldiers beyond measure, who have come to a very delightful part of the country from a very disagreeable one, and have taken their enemy in the rear besides. The fun with the Russian army during the night gave them great amusement, their remarks on the capsized waggons and baggage strewn about were excellent. The coast about here is something like that at Amalfi, about which I so raved. I have a Colonel Windham in my cabin to-night; he came off in consequence of a severe kick from a horse, and I put him in my cot to rest, otherwise quite well; however, at four o'clock he was seized with violent pain, which he thought the approach of cholera, and so did the doctor. He sent for me, poor fellow, to write to his wife for him. I cheered him up, got the doctor to sit by his side, who gave him calomel and opium every ten minutes for the first hour and a mustard plaster all over his stomach.

* The oft-repeated statement that the Russian panic was complete, and that Sebastopol might have been captured at once by a vigorous advance after the Alma, receives great support from the discovery of this large Russian force in disorderly retreat at this time.

He is certainly better, and is now sleeping soundly. So I sleep on the main-deck to-night. He is a man of large fortune, who came out to serve under Sir George Cathcart, at the capture of Sebastopol ; he is a fine fellow. . . .

“ 10 *p.m.* *In the harbour of Balaklava.*—Sir Edmund made up his mind to come into this singular place yesterday. Accordingly we came in at six this morning. It is a singular arm of the sea, bounded by very high hills, narrow, tortuous, and deep. The bends or turns are so narrow and sharp that it is very difficult for a large ship to enter, and the entrance to it is so masked that the initiated only would detect it ; having entered it and shut out the sea, Lord Raglan and staff appeared at the water's edge to greet us, waving their hats as we slowly passed. His lordship ordered the guard, consisting of a portion of the Grenadier Guards, to turn out and give us a cheer, to which we responded, the stirring sound echoing through the hills. Altogether it was a most interesting scene, and a great coup of Sir Edmund's, for here we are on the base of operations, with siege-train, provisions, and free communication with the army at the very moment they required it. This very singular place is quite a natural dock, excepting its lofty and precipitous hillsides. It is packed as full as possible with transports, steamers, and ourselves ; the armies occupy this and the neighbouring villages, as well as the adjoining heights, which in the hands of Europeans are impregnable. Lord Raglan and staff rode on towards Sebastopol to-day to within two miles of the works, without seeing the least sign of preparation to resist. When very close, a gentleman was observed moving leisurely along ; one of the staff was soon on the trail. He turned out to be a Mr. Upton, the son of an engineer of that name, who had been employed for years in the Russian service. On his father's death he settled here ; of course he was called on to return with the party to Balaklava. Nothing can be got out of him ; he says

he has become quite a Russian, and has received much kindness from them. . . . This is humbug ; once an Englishman, always an Englishman. Had he quitted them to give information, it would have been another thing ; even then he should have warned his employers that it was not possible for him to serve them longer. I think him a traitor, and legal opinion gives it against him. . . .”

“*September 27th.*—We are hard at work landing siege guns.

“*Noon.*—I was called away, and have been hard at work ever since landing heavy guns, mortars, etc. Many have moved onwards to their work of destruction, and I hope many more will follow soon. The spirits of the men are excellent, and the health improves. . . . Whitmore is on board ; I think I told you his horse was killed under him at the battle of the Alma. The rout the Russian divisions met with the other night was so complete that for miles the road was strewed with baggage and quantities of handsome things ; it so tickled the soldiers that the otherwise hard march was thought nothing of.”

“*September 29th.*—This natural dock, for little else can it be called, has been of the greatest importance to us. The ships lie about forty yards from the shore, so that every facility is afforded for landing the heavy guns and provisions for the army, and embarking the invalids. The men are still without tents, and the nights are very cold, but I trust in a day or two they will have them. Yesterday the aqueduct which supplies Sebastopol was blown up by the French, thus you see we are gradually approaching. To-day a thousand Marines land to take possession of the heights round the harbour. The poor fellows on shore have, notwithstanding very hard work and great privations, all to fare alike, share the rations and sleep on the ground rolled up in their blankets round

their camp fires. Fortunately our present locality is very healthy, spoken of as being so by all travellers and writers. I am therefore full of hope.

“*Noon.*—Moorsom is with us; he now performs his toilet in my cabin. I had a nice letter from John Borlase* yesterday; he came up in the ‘Arrow,’ and tried the celebrated guns of Lancaster’s construction upon the forts the day before yesterday. Four only were fired, but at a range of 5000 yards, and told with effect. The French Marshal St. Arnaud was embarked to-day, alive, and that is all. He has had a severe attack of cholera, from which there is scarcely a hope of his rallying. The command of the army devolves upon Canrobert, a great favourite and very gallant officer. I spoke to him on the battlefield of the Alma just as they were forming their bivouac; he had been severely wounded in the left shoulder and arm, but treated it as a small affair. He was in the midst of his men telling them what they were to do, etc. When he mounted the whole line cheered him. Expressing himself yesterday to one of Lord Raglan’s staff on the fight, he spoke of it to him as ‘*Votre bataille de l’Alma*,’ showing what he felt on the matter, and truly it was ours, for with our men was the terrible struggle against an overwhelming artillery. What a night it must have been to those who bivouacked on that terrible field; history does not tell of one more bloody. Mentschikoff said to his troops that they had done all that could be expected of men and soldiers, but that the soldiers with whom they had had to fight were either drunk or madmen; in fact, they were devils in red.”

“*September 30th, 1854.*—The most charming weather still continues for all our operations. The advanced works of Sebastopol have opened fire on our advanced posts and were

* Afterwards Admiral John Borlase.

at it for a considerable time yesterday. I believe our men take up their ground in front to-day, and some of the siege guns will go into position to-morrow. Lord Raglan, I hear, has an admirable quarter in a comfortable farmhouse, just out of range.

"*Noon.*—A thousand Marines were landed this morning to take possession of the heights and protect the anchorage. All the approaches in the rear by which artillery could come are being blown up by the Engineers to-day. . . . The commander-in-chief has given us three good lieutenants for the duty here, until our men are fit for work; the senior being at the hospital, one ill, one on the staff of Lord Raglan,* leaving two only for duty. But all hands work, gunners, boatswains, carpenters, men, everybody, and work well too. John Borlase has come up as a volunteer with us, and has just made his appearance in my cabin. . . ."

"*October 1st, Sunday.*—It is difficult in these times of war to recognize one day from another, so very rarely are we able to attend to the proper duties of the Sabbath Day. To add to our labours now several cavalry ships have arrived, and are to land their horses to-day. I think I have told you that guns are being landed from the ships, so that we may bring an overwhelming fire upon the place."

"*October 2nd, 5 a.m.*—Our weather continues to be marvelously fine, and our work progresses accordingly. As yet only a stray rifle-shot has been fired upon the place from our lines; they are constantly trying their range upon us, but with no effect. A thousand seamen are told off to man a battery of fifty guns; they are to land and work them themselves. . . ."

"*October 3rd, 1854. 5 a.m.*—Our heavy work is nearly over, and all the material of the siege train landed. Captain

* The present Admiral Maxse, the hero of an adventurous ride with despatches from Lord Raglan to the fleet during the night march of the army.

Lushington of the 'Albion' has been charged with the command of the brigade of seamen with fifty guns. He is now here and his men landed. They are all in the highest spirits, and are rattling their guns on the way merrily. I purpose a ride to the lines to-day to take a peep at the great fortress from the land side; nearly everybody has been but Heath and myself. I am thankful to say that the men have their tents now, and I hope will be altogether more comfortable.

"11 *a.m.*—I am going to take a half-holiday to visit the camp this afternoon. We have not as yet broken ground, as the Engineers term commencing the trenches; the moon is a little against us for such work, she shines so brightly and calmly upon us that the men cannot work unseen. The gallant Sir Colin Campbell came on board the day before yesterday to pay the admiral a visit, and begged a piece of soap to wash himself and shirt; he had only two, he said, the one on, the other off. I have just bestowed a bar on the brigade-major of artillery and friends; they gathered round it like the seekers at a goldfield round a newly-found nugget. All wear beards and moustaches, and look wretchedly dirty, but the spirits are high. The seamen are encamped on the road to the camp, having landed their battery of fifty guns complete. Everything is now landed except powder, shot, and some engineers' stores, which will be put on shore as required. I have had a useful lesson in the various embarkings and disembarkings, which I shall hereafter turn to account. . . .

"I have not had time for writing to you up to this moment. If you could see the various applications (upon my time) you would not wonder; artillery in all its branches, engineers, infantry, cavalry, medical and surgical departments, ordnance of every description, tent equipage, commissariat department not the least, supply of water when it cannot be found on shore. Then comes what is

more immediately my own department in all its branches—the duties of the ‘Agamemnon,’ the division of working parties to six or seven transports that have to be cleared of all the above; the harbour duties, placing of ships, regulation of the boats of the inshore or working squadron; the management of our six steam tenders; supply of fuel—and all this to be kept spurred up to the mark and in good spirit. I am called upon to keep military and naval men up to the mark, I assure you the first requiring it the most; and then come the suffering sick—the finest young fellows laid low by disease. Yet it is a gigantic work, one I do not in the least flinch from; and Europe, the world, hangs upon the success of our efforts and the destruction of this den. I cannot but think that the humiliation of the Russian is great: the north closed, his outposts destroyed, his armies driven from the principalities, beaten most completely near his strongest hold, and that itself besieged by a victorious army; the very lighthouse at the entrance of Sebastopol being in our possession and lighted every night as a beacon for his own destruction. Odessa’s trade is also stopped; in fact, the prospects of the mighty, boastful Czar are not very flourishing. . . .”

“*October 4th.*—After I closed my letter yesterday I rode to the lines before Sebastopol, accompanied by Heath and Stewart. We made a most interesting reconnaissance, looked well into the harbour, and had the honour to attract the attention of the garrison, who threw a few shell among us, that is, over us. I got back by six o’clock. We have not as yet fired a shot, which rather puzzles them. They are at a loss to know from what quarter an attack will be made. The heavy guns are all gone forward to their position, and a brigade of seamen moved up this morning. The Marines have strengthened themselves on the heights, and we have seventeen guns ready to go up to them. Russian deserters come out every night to the French and English camps;

I have just seen several shipped off to the 'Firebrand' for conveyance to the fleet and onwards. . . ."

"*October 6th.*—I see that the papers attribute the arrangement of the disembarkation to the first lieutenant of the 'Agamemnon'; it is well known in the right quarter who was the author. I have made many good friends up to this moment, as you observe; Lord Raglan himself is not the least among them; he came up to me on the beach the other morning, and, putting his hand on my shoulder, said, 'You* do everything for us; I don't know how we should have got on without you.' We walked up and down many minutes together, and nothing could have been kinder than his manner and conversation. As for the officers of the army generally, I find them very *gentlemanly*, *very slow*, but they fight *like Englishmen*. As I was overheard saying this upon the beach the other morning, it has been taken up as a general observation and joke which affords much merriment. The poor fellows are very hard pressed, I must say, and the campaign has been a very severe one—bad water and little of it, very scanty means of transport for their provisions, a very bad climate, immense labour and more *mismanagement* have tired the strongest. The scene for two days after that desperate battle was very dreadful. I suppose it is that the Almighty steels our hearts for the occasion, for though I embarked hundreds dreadfully wounded, *buried dozens* who died, some on the beach as they were about to embark, some during the transit from the field to the boat and boat to the ship, yet I did all as a matter of course. But the scene at night—wounded men by hundreds callous to the scene around them, the poor sufferers lying where the bearers from exhaustion had placed them, some almost in the wash of the sea, some on the plain, their countenances depicting their enduring agony, their parched lips just opening to intimate their want of the water for which their voices were powerless to ask, watch-fires lighted by the light-

* The Navy.

hearted, merrymaking by the winners of the great victory, ammunition landing in the midst of it to replenish the emptied cases, round which fires were burning through the night—together it was a wonderful scene, and not a murmur was heard: the groans of the dying, but not a complaint. If you will believe it, the arrangements at Constantinople are so bad in the hospitals, that the poor wounded are not attended to for three days together, England's best blood lying about without even a mattress under them. Lord Stratford has written very strongly on the subject. Eyewitnesses describe it as fearful to behold. The Russians made a reconnaissance of our position in force this morning—I mean the position of Balaklava—and drove in our cavalry pickets, killing two men; but an officer who had a good horse drew his man after him, and when he had him within fifteen yards with lance poised, pulled up, faced round, and shot his pursuer dead. We are throwing up field-works for light guns all round us here, which will make this place too strong for attack. We have cut the roads for artillery, and have possession of the heights. The ships lie like crumbs at the bottom of a deep butter-boat, so high are the hills around this very singular harbour. We are closer to the shore than the ships can lie at Malta, and are fastened by the sterns to the pier. I have, for instance, two anchors laid on the beach, which are lashed to a good, stout poplar-tree, and a hawser secured to the bases of two other good old trees."

"*Sunday, 8th, 5.30 a.m.*—A fresh, clear morning, a brilliant moon struggling with the dawn for the mastery. After our guests had taken their departure yesterday evening, and I was about to turn in, Sir Edmund sent for me to tell me of the eulogy expressed by the Duke of Newcastle in his letter to Lord Raglan on the arrangements for the disembarkation of the army. Sir Edmund tells me that it is well known who was the author of it. The letter to Sir J.

Graham accompanying a copy was quite enough to set the thing in a right way. As to my name appearing in the papers, I am very indifferent to that, so that I am sure justice is done me by the heads of my own service.

"I left off to dress, and whilst in my bath came a note from Sir Edmund, enclosing one written to Sir J. Graham to go by the mail to-day, telling him that he encloses with it copies of the details, such as were given to each ship for her guidance. Sir Edmund is determined I shall not lose by this, since he hears it spoken of as a thing to be handed down to posterity. Such was the comment of the Duke of Newcastle.

"I know it was a good thing, but I also know it might be better; however, others are ignorant of that, and my brethren in the service considered it perfect. Had our commander-in-chief carried it out in the spirit with which it was desired, the execution would have been as perfect as the plan; but he was not the man, and he will see more in the next papers he receives than he will care to see. The feeling in both services towards him is undisguised. Had it not been for the stirring spirit and strong mind displayed here by Sir Edmund, the Navy would have cut a worse figure than it now does. There has been a lack of energy as well as moral and physical courage that makes the blood curdle to think of in Englishmen. . . .

"It seems that the advance of the Russian troops yesterday was merely with a hope to discover what we were about. Two or three hours after they retreated before our horse artillery a cavalry patrol went over the ground and found it strewn with arms, shakos, packs, etc., which would imply that they lost some men, took fright, threw away their baggage, and made a bolt of it as best they could. I am going to mount and move up our ship field-guns this afternoon to protect the heights. The fact is, strange as it may appear, little is done that the Navy do not take the initiative in. Sir

Edmund does not fail to put in the spur where Horseguard apathy and formality block up the road to the front. . . .”

“*October 9th, 6 a.m.*—Our days, though full of interest to the world and excitement to ourselves, are nevertheless very much alike. All efforts are devoted to advancing the siege and protecting this place as a rear and base of operations. Fortunately, the site occupied by the army is a natural fortress on a grand scale, therefore, with the addition of a few guns on salient points, is impregnable against Russian troops, and could only be assailed in front, where it is not likely to be attempted, so wholesome a dread have they of the allied arms. During the night before last the French closed very much in upon the works, and their riflemen advanced to within a thousand yards, where they dug holes in the earth for themselves to lie in out of the fire of the enemy, whilst they could easily see any man who showed himself from the walls. Whilst the French were about this, and all attention given by the garrison to their movements, our sappers opened the trenches and prepared two batteries unobserved, which were to commence fire this morning. The guns first to be used are those of the ‘Terrible’ and ‘Beagle,’ as their range is very great. Sir Edmund and Mr. Layard together have thought it right to send to Sir J. Graham a plan showing the ships and boats of the great flotilla at the disembarkation, with my name affixed by Sir Edmund, and Cleeve tells me that his letters are *very, very* strong. Mr. Layard, it seems, intends to call for returns in Parliament, and will ask, I fancy, for this very sheet, so bent are they on justice being done and credit falling on the right person.”

CHAPTER XIV

1854

"October 10th.—The wind has set in from the north-east and is bitterly cold, so cold that we are glad of winter clothing, warm flannels, etc. We have done little or nothing as yet to harass the enemy, and very great dissatisfaction prevails at the tardiness of the Engineers. Sir John Burgoyne is too old, the work ought in justice to be in younger hands. I confess that I am greatly struck at the apparent want of energy that prevails, whilst the Russians have not lost a moment to strengthen themselves in their position, and will give us treble work. . . .

"7, evening.—This afternoon I have amused myself getting two 12-pounders up the heights to command the road leading from the eastward to Balaklava ; the road itself has been cut across and scraped away so as to prevent the passage of the enemy's artillery ; breastworks have been thrown up of sand-bags, behind which the thirty Marines keep a night guard. On five positions of considerable strength we have thrown up earthworks for guns, which are to be placed in them to-morrow. Redoubts are also to be constructed at once on a chain of hills in advance of this, completely encircling Balaklava, and rendering the position perfectly secure. Whilst we have been occupied about this, the French and English have thrown up a chain of field-works in the rear of the whole position, in which guns are to be placed immediately. No position could possibly be stronger than the

one we occupy. The trenches have been commenced and go on on a very large scale to-night. . . .

“Lord Raglan has been called upon to do a cruel thing to-day. It came to our knowledge that it was the intention to set fire to this place, with the hope of burning our stores, and there is no doubt the bait is very tempting, quite worth the while of Russia to pay for. Accordingly, the village has been cleared of everybody but the women and children, who, for the most part, have followed their husbands or male relations. It was a painful sight to see the poor creatures wending their way along the plain; it recalled the group sketched to illustrate the deserted village; the old and infirm, youth and infancy, the healthy and strong, all, all turned out of house and home. Such is war! Such has the Czar to answer for. Providence seems so to favour this expedition that it would almost seem that France and England are the instruments used to scourge the monster.

“11th, 6 a.m.—A calm, cold morning. Guns have been booming all night, doubtless from the fortress upon the working parties in the trenches. Read the *Examiner** of the 23rd September; Sir Edmund put it into my hand last evening, having previously said to Cleeve, ‘How satisfactory and gratifying that will be to Captain Mends, to whom, without knowing it, it does justice.’ Mr. Layard subsequently said he should write to Foster, the editor, to say who had done it all. I cannot but feel pleased that my countrymen are satisfied that all was done in preparation for so gigantic an undertaking.

“Noon.—Cleeve has just been telling me that Sir Edmund said again last evening, ‘How complimentary that is to Mends.’ I find he has written, by the last two mails, very strongly to Sir James Graham, pointing out to whom the credit of the arrangement was due. If it please God to

* A reference to his arrangements for the transport of the army from Varna.

spare me through it all, it will be useful hereafter to have done so well ; at any rate, it will do *you* all good, whatever happens. Our men threw up entrenchments during last night, for twenty guns, and returned to camp this morning safe and sound, in spite of the quantity of shot and shell expended upon them. The French are farther advanced than we are, having better ground for their work. Sir Edmund is off to the camp. French cavalry are landing, and I am getting on shore plenty of guns for our defence."

"*October 13th, 6 a.m.*—I did not say a word to you yesterday, for I was on horseback from early morning until three o'clock, and at work on foot from that time until it was time for dinner, after which I was too fagged for even a line.

"I was employed superintending the arrival of five batteries which have been thrown up for the protection of Balaklava, preparing in fact against an attack or surprise which we have heard is threatened. You would be *surprised* to see how much we point out to our brother or sister service, that turns out to be as important as we had conceived, and remained uncared for. . . .

"The Russians expend hundreds of shot and shell, but do scarcely any harm to us ; the firing amuses and excites the troops, who run after the shot as they go bounding along, sometimes through their camp.

"*2 p.m.*—I mounted my pony at nine, and am this moment off his back. When on the highest crest, where our advanced guard of Marines is posted, up came Sir Colin Campbell, Sir Edmund, and Steele, Lord Raglan's military secretary. A Captain Fortescue, of the Artillery, and Spratt, were with me, examining the position and pointing out the weak points to the officer of Engineers who has been sent to construct field defences for us. We had a long consultation on the importance of the point ; it was the one on which I planted my 12-pounders the other night ; decided on much that was

useful, and Steele told me that Sir Colin had come to take the command of the Balaklava district. I am delighted beyond measure, as I pressed the importance of a general officer being appointed here yesterday in such strong terms that Steele went himself direct to Lord Raglan's bedside when he returned to the camp to urge it upon him. Now Balaklava is safe, come as many Russians as please; five strong batteries in excellent position for sweeping the plain, and 800 men on the height with my little guns, commanding a gorge that would only be attempted by a very bold enemy, bolder, I fancy, than Russians.

"A strange incident and narrow escape occurred in the lines three nights ago. A soldier was sitting on the ground cleaning his musket, his cap stuck on the top of his head, with the chin-strap strapped across the crown to be clear of his face. A sixty-eight pound shot came rattling along, cut the chin-strap in two, took off the crown of the cap, knocked the musket out of his hand, and passed on, doing no further damage, to the man's wonderment and the soldiers' merriment.

"Harry Hillyar is with the Naval Brigade in the trenches, in the place of poor Randolph, who throughout the danger was too ill to continue at his post. I hope my next may announce to you the fall of Sebastopol. All hearts are ready, and very impatient to strike the blow. I am in great hopes that all women and children have been removed, or dreadful will be the storm when the soldiers are infuriated. More heavy guns are to be landed for the purpose of battering some of the parts well, and completely destroying the dock-yard and ships. The guns are to come from the 'Terrible,' to be placed in the French lines, worked by our seamen.

"I saw Captain Curry last evening; he is in charge of one of the batteries, the strongest and the best. I fancy that when the attack commences, or is about to begin, we shall go round to the point to see what is to be done. It is quite commonly reported that Admiral Dundas is to be imme-

diately recalled ; the wish, I fancy, fathers the thought ; he ought to have been so some months ago. It is not a desirable moment for it. Sebastopol may fall, then the world will sympathize with him. . . .

“Three thousand Turkish troops have just been landed, and are to be put into earthworks ; as many more are on their way. This will lighten the work of our men. Our steamers are employed to bring them up, as well as French troops. I believe it is quite certain that we shall open fire on Monday next ; then, and then only, can we form an idea of the time it will take to capture it. . . .”

“*Balaklava, October 14th.*—I begin to hear rumours of our move. Sir Edmund has told me he intends to start, but has not named the time ; I fancy Monday or Tuesday will see us away. Snug as this place is, I shall not be sorry to move, as it begins to be a little unwholesome.”

“10.30 *p.m.*—I have had a very delightful day. I decided after breakfast to take a holiday, and accompanied by Mr. Layard, set out for the camp. To the most unpractised eye it is impossible not to be struck with the natural strength of the position. A platform, nearly a complete circle of five or six miles in diameter, rises out of a plain on one segment (the sea is on another, the harbour on a third) about 180 to 300 feet above the level ; on this plateau are encamped the allied armies, English, French, and Turkish, mustering about 75,000 men, with their front looking down on the city, and their rear, if it can be called so (for it seems everywhere) towards the valley of Balaklava. All commanding points have been taken possession and advantage of to erect field works against surprise or attack in flank ; in these works guns are planted, and breastworks surround the ridge to protect infantry. Water is found in sufficient quantity, and a fair quantity of wood is procured. Farms and vineyards are dotted about in all directions, many now showing that war

is about them, the walls merely standing, the wood having disappeared to make the soldiers' camp fires. A skirmish of outposts terminated as we reached the ground, in which one of our riflemen was wounded, two Russians were killed and two taken prisoners, who are now on board the 'Agamemnon.' Mr. Layard being a friend of Sir de Lacy Evans, we visited his tent, and were directed to the best points overlooking the port and works from his division. Whilst lunching with the general, the Duke of Cambridge and Sir George Brown rode up to make arrangements for the night, and gossip; from this I gathered a good idea of the work in hand. They gave me a hearty welcome in their camp, as though they were really glad to see me. We next proceeded to an advanced point to look into the trenches, on which a considerable though ineffectual fire was directed. It was amusing to see the men, as each flash occurred, either drop to the ground or run forward to the parapet to secure themselves. Riding back it was just dusk, the watch fires were lighting all round us on hill, valley, and plain—a pretty sight. We leave this to-morrow to join the fleet, anchored to the northward of Sebastopol, and probably prepare to take part in the reduction of this formidable fortress. I, at least, hope so, or the Navy will not come out of this with credit. From the eminence before the line to-day we looked completely down upon the harbour, town, forts, and the French and English fleets lying outside, so you may imagine the command it has. Every shot will tell on fortress or town or arsenal; none can fall harmless. We have been reinforced to-day by 6000 French troops and 5000 Turkish. A few English regiments would be acceptable if we could get them, but we have enough for the work. The 'Arethusa' has come to take the port duties of Balaklava. . . ."



"15th, 6 a.m.—We are preparing for a move, and shall be dancing up our anchor presently. . . ."

"10, *evening, off Balaklava*.—We got out of our little port at half-past twelve. Sir Edmund went off to the fleet at eight (morning) to attend a conference of admirals; he only returned at nine (evening), just as we had finished dinner. Whilst we drank a glass of wine he dined, and entertained us with the topics of the conference. As soon as we adjourned to the after cabin he read us all the letters from Sir James Graham and others touching the expedition, the very successful landing of the army, etc., in most eulogistic terms; in fact, Sir J. Graham said the country was deeply indebted to him; that no expedition would have taken place but for his zeal and exertions. . . .

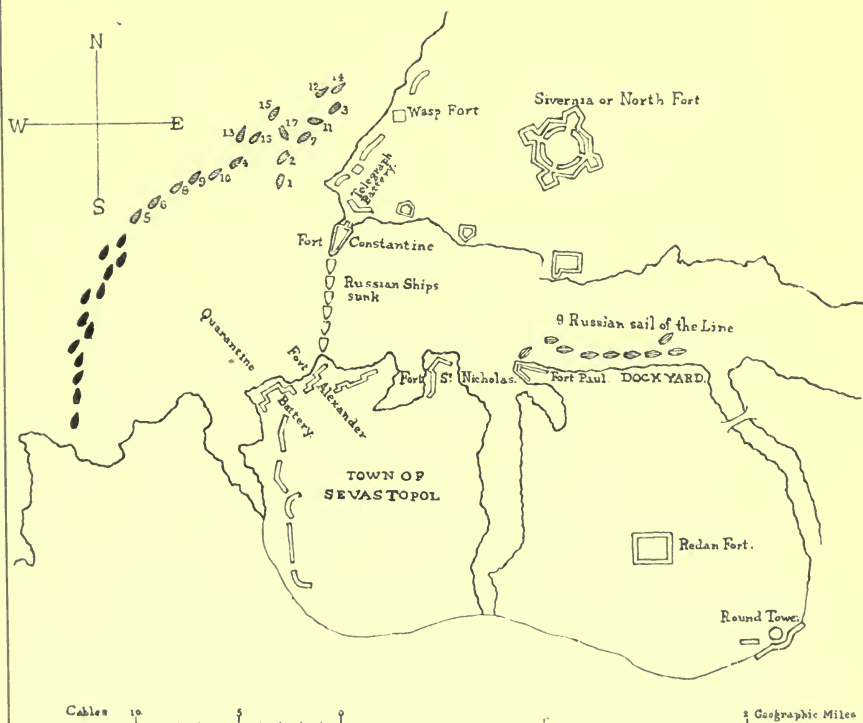
We had quite a squeeze this morning coming out of harbour, so small, so narrow, and so full of shipping: we were *very, very* near the shore once, and in contact with a ship for a moment, but without damage; the turnings are so short and sharp that it was most difficult for so large a ship to pass out or in. I am so rejoiced we went in, it was a great coup; gave the army confidence, and the presence of the flag set matters ahead. It was in contemplation to shift the flag into a smaller ship for the purpose, and had I made the least difficulty it would have been done, but I felt the importance of holding to my chief at all risks, therefore I said there was no difficulty in going in or out. We have only now to assist in the reduction of the fortress by firing a few shot when the attack takes place, and 'Agamemnon' will have done her country a good turn, though I should be truly sorry if the place fell without the co-operation of the Navy. Old England's flag shall yet wave either over the battlements or ruined walls of the far-famed Sebastopol before many days have passed on. . . ."

"*Wednesday, October 18th, 9 o'clock*.*—The plan of attack was as ill-contrived as could be, therefore the hearty and willing bore the brunt of the day, because they declined to

* The day after the sea attack.

FRENCH & TURKISH SHIPS THUS..... 
 ENGLISH SHIPS THUS..... 

- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Atreusmon. | 7. London. | 13 Tribune. |
| 2. Sans-Pareil. | 8. Vengeance. | 14. Terrible. |
| 3. Albion. | 9. Rodney. | 15. Sphinx. |
| 4. Queen. | 10. Belleophon. | 16. Lynx. |
| 5. Britannia. | 11. Arethusa. | 17. Spitfire. |
| 6. Trafalgar. | 12. Sampson. | |



PLAN OF THE ATTACK OF THE ALLIED FLEETS ON SEVASTOPOL,
 OCTOBER 17, 1854.

From a drawing by Lieut. Couper Coles, R.N.

follow it, and my gallant chief led into and held the post of danger. At nine all captains and masters were summoned on board the 'Britannia' to hear the plan of attack on these formidable works. Sir Edmund Lyons remonstrated on the position the ships were ordered to take up, as well as on the method of proceeding into action, the former being too distant from the forts, the latter too long in performing. His remonstrance had a certain effect, as 'London' and 'Sanspareil' were ordered to follow and support 'Agamemnon,' to whom *carte blanche* was given to do as she liked. At about one o'clock the French ships advanced and opened fire, but at very long range, on the south side of the harbour. 'Britannia' and consorts made a *détour* of considerable size, and came up opposite the harbour's mouth. 'Agamemnon,' with 'Sanspareil' and 'London,' went down inshore from the north side, engaging the batteries on the heights as she advanced. At length we were compelled to cease firing to take up position, which we did at about 750 yards from the great fort at the north entrance of the harbour.* I must go back a little, to tell you that as soon as we were ready for action I assembled all the captains and second captains of guns on the quarter-deck, and addressed them on the plan of attack, the necessity for coolness, and not to throw away a shot; after which I piped to dinner. Never was advice better received or responded to, for their coolness under a heavy ripping fire was very remarkable and highly honourable; in fact, they did their work as Englishmen should do it. As we were running down to our goal we exchanged cheers with the 'Sanspareil,' and then went at it, under I am told as heavy a fire as could well be bestowed, by about sixty guns placed on shore in different positions.† We anchored beautifully, and opened a magnificent fire upon the heavy work; the shot and shell fell like hail in and about it; soon a magazine within it blew up, whereupon we gave three good cheers and redoubled our fire, until not a man appeared on

* Fort Constantine. † See Appendix IX. for extract from log of "Agamemnon."

the upper part of it, and only three guns continued to fire from a battery where sixty had been pouring destruction upon the advancing ships. We were getting severely punished, and one of our supporters feeling it very hot, *inexplicably* withdrew, upon which the mass of fire fell upon us, and nothing but the rapidity and precision of our own fire saved us from destruction. Sir Edmund consulted with me on a signal to be made—upon which we adopted No. 13—‘Close the enemy and engage *for mutual support*.’ The smoke was so dense, and the roar of 800 guns, with the *whizzing, whizzing* sound of the shot passing everywhere, so deafening and terrible that we could not get immediate attention to it, and were compelled to send a boat to ‘Bellerophon’ with instructions to close in to our support. This service was gallantly undertaken and performed by Coles,* the flag-lieutenant, through a perfect shower of shot, shell, and rockets, who returned unscathed. Presently in came ‘Rodney,’ ‘Queen,’ and ‘Bellerophon,’ and we were partially released. Sunset was not far off, and it was become dusk from the smoke, the sun having appeared the whole afternoon of a blood-red colour. By this time we had been twice on fire, once in the hull, once aloft; we had four men killed, twenty badly wounded; mainmast in a tottering state, mainyard all but falling, fore, main, and mizzen topsail yards shot away, foreyard badly wounded, decks ripped up in many places; funnel and steam-pipes seriously injured; about forty shot sticking in our sides, and many ripping shell explosions that had torn the sides away in places; our rigging cut to pieces and the ship only just clear of the ground, with the ‘Rodney’ that had gallantly come to our relief with us head to head and touching the ground. Whilst thus situated, the admiral kindly consulted with me as to what it would be right to do, as also our ammunition was getting low. I said, ‘I think you ought to back out of fire,

* See Appendix X.



"We were compelled to send a boat to 'Bellerophon' with instructions to close in to our support."

From a painting by Lieut. Cooper Coles, R.N.

sir, as the men are much exhausted. He hesitated and changed his mind several times; at last he generously said, 'Your advice was right in coming in, or I should have been on shore, and it is good now, so get her out'; and out we came, looking a trifle dishevelled, as you may suppose, but, they tell us, full of honour and credit, thank God. All did their duty well; numerous and loud are the praises this morning of 'Agamemnon's' noble lead into action, and many the congratulations to those who had the honour to be in or near her. I am now professionally happy; I am thankful to a merciful God for so wonderfully preserving me, and my dear wife's heart will rejoice at the honours gloriously won by her husband. The loss in some ships has been more severe than in ours, though we have suffered more materially in hull, spars, and rigging than anybody. To my knowledge I had only two really narrow escapes—one was from a shell that exploded on the poop netting about six feet from my head; another was from a double-headed shot weighing about 50 lbs., which struck against our mainmast, badly wounding it, then glanced off towards me on the poop. My attention was providentially directed to it by its crashing sound against the mast, consequently I saw the large half, for it broke in two, coming down upon my precious carcase in time to jump on one side, or I should have been assuredly killed by it. When it ceased its bounds I picked, or rather attempted to pick it up, but found it hot, too hot to touch, not hot enough to burn a ship. Thus ends the naval attack upon Sebastopol for the present, nor do I think another will be tried, so futile are the efforts of ships against batteries unless they can get very close to them. . . ."

"I have not mentioned, I see, that the allies opened fire from their batteries upon the town yesterday at daylight, and keep it up still without a moment's cessation. Our loss has been five killed and twenty-two wounded. Just now a great explosion took place on the very spot on which our batteries are directed, much to the joy of all lookers-on. . . ."

“‘*Agamemnon*,’ six miles north of Sebastopol, October 19th, 1854.—Sundry were the congratulations on the proud position taken by the ‘*Agamemnon*,’ and the honour due to Sir Edmund and all under him. To-day numerous are the visitors to see the well-hammered ‘*Agamemnon*’; her hull honourably battered; her engaged side besmeared from top to bottom with powder so as scarcely to distinguish the streaks, something like the hull of ‘*Vengeance*’ at the funeral of poor Sir Henry Blackwood; her spars all shattered and her rigging cut to pieces. On examination we find the damage to the last much more extensive than we had supposed. From all this you will wonder that our loss was so small, but there are good reasons for its being so. First, we ran in so close and so much under the heights that they could not, in some of the batteries, depress the guns sufficiently. Secondly, we kept up so rapid and correct a fire that the enemy were glad to lay behind their casemates and parapets. . . .

“I do sincerely hope that the House of Commons will make a searching enquiry into the public departments of the Horse Guards and the Admiralty; if they do not, the jobbing of places, the advance of interest or birth—call it by what name you like—over intelligence, skill, and merit, will bring disgrace and disaster upon our glorious flag. . . .”

“*October 20th.*—We hear that Fort Constantine is nearly breached. Hurrah for ‘*Agamemnon*’s’ fire! . . .* ”

“You can scarcely conceive what a bond of union this battle has knit in the ship; we all feel the better for being under fire, I mean better pleased with each other and ourselves. Lord Raglan wrote a very delightful letter to Sir Edmund, which he received and read to us this morning. Nothing could be higher or more eulogistic than his mention of the ‘*Agamemnon*,’ and I am told that the pleasure was

* See Appendices XI. and XII.

very general when they heard that we had come safely out of it. All this is very pleasant to hear.

"Bruat writes his congratulations and felicitations upon it, and adds a postscript which will tend to make me vain: 'Presentez mes compliments au brave Capitaine Mends. . . .'*

"*October 21st.*—We find the rigging cut to pieces. It is a saying that 'fortune favours the brave'; there is no doubt that the close position we took up saved us a much worse hammering. . . .

"I have ever longed to be really under fire in a good action, and am now thoroughly happy. I shall never forget the pleasurable thrill that passed through me when my chief took me by the hand to thank and congratulate me on that day's work. . . .

"'Arethusa' left this on Friday to repair damages. 'Albion' left to-day for Constantinople in a very shattered condition; she suffered very much because she slacked her own fire."

"*October 22nd.*—Admiral Nachimoff, who commanded the Russian fleet that destroyed the poor Turks at Sinope, was killed the day before yesterday. We hear from prisoners and deserters that much confusion and dismay, as well as fear, prevails among the troops in Sebastopol; they tell us that 5000 have been placed *hors de combat*. We have had the town on fire pretty often, and small magazines have been blown up. Our batteries do the chief work; the French have not done so well. We hear that they have been quarrelling among themselves, artillery and engineers squabbling terribly, army and navy violently. They have permitted three of their mortars to be spiked, and this in spite of our grumblers that the French do everything better than we do. . . .

* On their first meeting after this engagement, Bruat said to my father, "Mends, if you were not married I would give you my daughter," which would seem to show that even a reputation for valour may have its drawbacks.

"Many amusing circumstances occur daily, showing gallantry and spirit. Peel of the 'Diamond' is full of pluck and zeal. A live shell with a fizzing fuse fell into his battery the other day; he ran to it, took it up, and threw it over the parapet, where it instantly exploded harmless, whereas it might have done great harm inside. The wiser course would have been to call out, 'Shell! down on your faces,' when no harm could have accrued, nor would such risk have been run.

"A soldier of the 33rd Regiment was taken prisoner a day or two since, and was being marched off into the fortress between two Russians. Watching his opportunity, he wrested the musket from one, shot the other, knocked the first *gently* over the crown with the butt-end, and ran back to his camp amidst the cheers of his comrades. A French soldier was taken the other night, but when he got into the place, such was the confusion that he escaped his captors, looked about him for information, and returned to his camp. The night before last when the Russians made a sortie—it was upon the French batteries—it was repulsed, and many were taken prisoners. Among them was a Russian captain, who called out, 'Ne tirez pas, ne tirez pas, je suis ami des Anglais,' fancying, I suppose, that he had got into the English lines. From him it was that they derived the information of Nachimoff's death, and we now hear that Korniloff is also killed, another admiral.

"11 *p.m.*—Sir Edmund is just returned. He tells me that the poor Russian captain who was taken in the French lines had thirteen bayonet wounds, and died. Did I tell you of the admiral's servant having lost his arm? He followed the admiral about the poop that he might be of use; Sir Edmund told him not to remain up, but go under the poop, in fact sent him there, much against the poor lad's will. No sooner was he down into what the admiral considered comparative safety, than a round shot came in, took off his right

arm, ripped up the deck, bounded up to the beam or ceiling of the cabin, and fell, rolling nearly over the toes of a little cadet who was standing by. Sir Edmund was greatly affected about his poor servant; he has him^d in his cabin under a nice screen, and watches him as if he were his own son, with the tenderest solicitude. As soon as we were out of action he went down to the cockpit to see him, and sent him arrowroot at once. . . .”

“23rd.—Yesterday was quite a day of rest, except to those working in the trenches and at the batteries. I was very thankful for it. I do not think I have had such a one for three months. I devoted a portion of it to writing letters and advancing all the men I had for ratings, including ten boys who did not in the least expect it, as a battle promotion. The ship's company have written two nice letters to the admiral, myself, and the officers, thanking us for the very good character we have given them, and for having given the ship so noble a position; expressing a readiness to go at it again immediately. . . .*

“The whole of the admirals and captains of the French fleet came on board yesterday afternoon, *en grande tenue*,

* “H.M.S. ‘AGAMEMNON,’ OFF SEBASTOPOL,
October 21st, 1854.

“SIR,—I beg your pardon for the liberty that I now take upon myself in addressing these few lines to you, knowing at the same time the trouble and anxiety that you have upon your mind at this present moment in the refitting of the Ship, but our brave old Admiral on the night of tuesday last and likewise every Officer I believe in the Ship, could not rest without thanking the Ship's company for doing but their duty in the best manner we knew how. And I could not rest until I had done this, for I felt sorry to think that there was not a petty officer that could go forward and thank our officers on behalf of the Ship's company for the character that they had given us, and for the perseverance and bravery of yourself and our Admiral for taking us in so close. And I know that it is their intention to return their Sincere thanks after Sebastopol is taken, but as I trust that we shall have another slap at them soon, and that their may be many loose the number of their Mess which would then be to late, I could not wait. We have likewise to congratulate with our brave lieutenant Mr. Rowlands upon his happy most lucky and momentious return before action. And I trust that you all may live to experience the surrender of our foes, and the day that we may learn to respect them for their bravery. And I trust that you may consider this to be the feeling of every Man on board of the Ship, from the oldest Man

to pay their respects and offer their felicitations and thanks to Sir Edmund for the great gallantry he displayed in placing 'Agamemnon' before such a stupendous battery. They took me by both arms, congratulating me most warmly; it is a proud moment for a man. . . .

"Coles,* the flag-lieutenant, has done some sketches of the ship, which are to go home for the illustrated papers. . . .

"It is half-past six, just the hour they commence rapid play upon the town. There go the guns—the mortars shake the ships even at this distance. . . .

"I send you with this a little plan of the position taken up by the fleets on the day of attack. You will judge for yourself of that occupied by the 'Agamemnon,' etc. . . ."

"24th.—The weather is beginning to be somewhat unsettled in appearance, with swell—we must look for it now. I accompany Sir Edmund to dine with the commander-in-chief to-day at half-past five, to meet Captain Talbot of the 'Algiers.' A fire in the town burned all night, and another has been burning this afternoon. We hear that the great hospital has been burnt also. So much for war. Over all these horrors we exult, and when a good explosion takes place, which probably destroys hundreds of human beings, we cheer. Oh, war! war! it is a horrid thing."

down to the smallest Boy in her. We could not express our gratitude by cheering it being against your inclinations and likewise ours on account of our dead Ship-mates that where on the gangway at the time, this I conclude with a prayer for long life and the reaching of that rank of which you all deserve.

"We remain yours Obedient and Humble Servants,

"CAPTAIN R. MENDS, *H.M.S. Agamemnon*.

"Signed, WM. BATCHELOR.

"The Ship's Company is very thankful to hear of the Character which is bestowed on them for their conduct by all those above them. We should wish, if possible to show our thankfulness to them by acting the same part over again should it be required and we should wish with more success than before, you need not fear we will do our best.

"And now we wish to venture our thanks for the gallant conduct of those in charge of the Ship and the way they brought her into action, and to the conduct of all the Officers on board, without any exception whatever.

"We remain your dutiful Servants,

"THE SHIP'S COMPANY OF THE 'AGAMEMNON.'"

* Afterwards Captain Cowper Coles, drowned in *H.M.S. "Captain."*

"25th, 10 a.m.—I scarcely know myself with so much rest. Sir Edmund has gone off to the camp to advise and consult.

"An amusing piece of witticism has got up among the seamen. The ship's corporal, at the entering port of the 'Britannia,' in the execution of his office orders boats to lay off; *now* if he be very strict I hear they call out, 'Aye! aye! sir, 2,500 yards'; meaning by that to reflect upon the position taken up by the 'Britannia' before the batteries, about which there is much joking."

"October 26th, 6 a.m.—Sir Edmund returned to a late dinner. The intelligence he brought with him is not of the most favourable character, not with regard to the front, but the rear, resting on Balaklava, which was threatened by a large Russian force. The Russians advanced absolutely into the plain, turning the position held by the Turks, who, instead of standing to their guns, ran away without even spiking them, upon which the Russians turned them about upon us. Our heavy cavalry had an opening for a charge and executed it most brilliantly, riding three times through and through the enemy, cutting down great numbers. This manœuvre caused them to close their columns to prevent any more such onsets upon them; but that sapient man, my Lord Lucan, ordered the light cavalry to advance and charge. Englishmen-like, they went right at them and rode through the masses, but were hemmed in, overmatched, and shot down in numbers; I believe 120 fell dead, including two officers we know very well, one of them a brother of one of our midshipmen. It was at once pronounced by Lord Raglan to be the error of the general commanding the cavalry. Sir Edmund was much pained by it. As soon as they advanced within range of *my* batteries* and shot began to drop among their ranks, they fell back, retaining, however, the position they had won, therefore claiming very properly an advantage gained, of

* *Vide ante.* The 12-pounders got up for the defence of the Balaklava position by "Agamemnon" during her time in the harbour.

which they will make the most, and all through bad generalship on our part."

"27th, 5 a.m.—The Russians made an attack on our extreme right, which was gallantly repulsed with considerable loss to the enemy; but as we could see the skirmishing from the poops of the ships where I was paying visits, my mind was too much occupied for a gossip. . . .

"Sir Edmund returned at seven with the daily camp news; dinner at eight or thereabouts, and from ten to half-past eleven Cleeve, he, and I gossiped over the day, and the chief read many of the very charming letters he is receiving from all the great men of our country, at this time trebly interesting. He reads them all to us, and most delightful they are, bestowing unqualified praise and honour upon him for his exertions.

"He is off in the 'Lynx' this morning to Balaklava, to see more particularly to its defence, as he is determined it shall not be given up,* so important is it as a basis for us, until we get possession of Sebastopol. I fear the good people of England will be greatly disappointed it is not already ours. Sundry are the opinions upon it. Some say we could and ought to have walked in after the battle of the Alma, and the gallant and strategic march round it to the south, when the panic was complete and the south side undefended. Others say we ought, as soon as possible, to have advanced a few of the heavy guns to play upon the place, harass as well as prevent the workmen from throwing up earthworks for its defence. Others again say either was bad—the first attended with risk; the second would call down upon us, before we were quite ready, the guns in position, few though they were. Doubtless a master mind was wanting to decide the knotty point. As it is, the place, though greatly battered,

* It would appear that the general, not grasping the value of the land-locked harbour of Balaklava on that exposed lee shore, as seamen did, and recognizing only the fact that a considerable number of men were required for its defence, talked of abandoning it.

will have to be taken by assault ; then, though we get possession of the town, docks, etc., we have still the north side, with its string of fortresses, to overcome. It is believed by many that when the south side, or town and arsenal, fall, the north will give in ; but I am not of that opinion. Doubtless the difficulties of the commanders-in-chief have been many and great. First, their utter want of information of the strength to be opposed to them in the Crimea ; secondly, the want of knowledge of the country itself, the supply of water, wood, etc. ; thirdly, the pestilential disease which so long hung about the camp, rendering it highly dangerous to expose the army to any extraordinary fatigue, the rapid march by compass to the south even being as much as the men were equal to ; fourthly, all supplies, or nearly all, having to be conveyed by sea along the coast, in accordance with the army's advance, prevented a movement inland to attack an army in the field which might be supposed to be gathering. Nevertheless, a certain degree of apathy and very much ignorance prevails, made up for only by the desperate gallantry of the troops, which ever covers the faults of superiors, and on this they depend. All this must be apparent to you by Sir Edmund being virtually commander-in-chief of the Navy, and an active adviser and participator in the arrangements for the Army, which ought not to be. . . ."

"*October 28th, 6 a.m.*—Sir Edmund's news was interesting last night. He described, with other details, the attack made upon the ridge before Balaklava on Wednesday, where the Turks were posted, and from which the rascals ran like mad, leaving the guns we had placed there in the hands of the enemy. Fortunately our English gunner of the Artillery was with them, and he succeeded in spiking all but one. The charge of the heavy cavalry is said to have been unsurpassed in brilliancy, daring, and success, inflicting very severe loss upon the enemy. The charge of the light cavalry was equal

in brilliancy and gallantry to anything military men could desire, but it was ill-judged, and the poor officer who conveyed the order upon his own responsibility—that is, added to the orders he received from Lord Lucan—fell dead in the charge. They absolutely rode upon the guns, broke the ranks, and sabred the gunners. One officer killed thirteen men with his own sword, and got safe back without a scratch. The Russians, however, held the position they had taken, which was considered too advanced for our main body, and they very properly called it a victory. Our loss was very considerable. 650 men rode in that fearful light cavalry charge upon 15,000 of the enemy; 200 only rode back to their post; 420 were either killed, badly wounded, or made prisoners—we hope many of the latter, but Englishmen are not easily captured. It turns out that the success on Wednesday was the cause of the sortie on Thursday. The prisoners taken by us on that day say that Mentschikoff harangued the troops on a great victory and the capture of fifty guns, ordered a *Te Deum*, when it was over told off 6000 of his best men, *gave them a dram*, then, pointing to the heights, said, ‘There are the English, go and spike their guns.’ Up they went at a brisk pace, opened fire; our captain’s picket checked them a little, whilst our men advanced. The instant we opened fire they halted; our fellows continued to advance, and poured in a destructive fire as they moved forwards, whereupon even the courage they had received *from Holland* failed them, and back they went at a brisk pace. Our men still advanced more rapidly, and actually overtook and closed with them on their own glacis before the town, where they punished them considerably. Two captains and upwards of 100 men were taken prisoners, about 300 were killed, and as many wounded; 150 were buried by our men in the front of our position, and we could see the Russians doing the same on theirs. Sir Edmund’s object yesterday was to reinforce the garrison of Balaklava, restore confidence there, and make the harbour

more secure. This has been done. Reinforcements from France and England, though not immediately wanted, are looked for with great anxiety, as after the storm the rear will need protection; but I have no misgivings. The place *must* fall, and that soon. The sortie and the retreat of the Russians will not improve the nerves of the garrison, who could witness the whole thing.

“10 *a.m.*—Our loss was eighteen killed and forty wounded, some severely. Admiral Bruat has just been on board to ask me to dine with him to-morrow. It is very pleasant being here our own masters; the time is so completely our own, better even than as commander-in-chief, for then my work will begin. What a wonderful aptitude Sir Edmund has for business, not details exactly, but for all the leading features of a case, with a power of concentrating his energies and mind upon one thing, the thing of the moment, that is quite wonderful. He is for the time absorbed in it, lost to all else, and in such absence does the most ridiculous, trivial absurdities. . . .

“He tells a story of himself of Lord Arundel’s holding his horse’s stirrup for him to mount once, and that he put his hand into his pocket for money which was tendered and accepted, so absent was he. . . .”

“‘*Agamemnon*,’ off *Balaklava*, *October 30th.*—I was too tired and too much occupied yesterday to write a line to you. We were at anchor off Kamiesh Bay, a small port occupied by the French about two miles from the entrance of Sebastopol and one mile from the lighthouse, on the night before last. Being outside the harbour in the completely open sea, it was by no means a pleasant or entirely safe anchorage, with a north-easterly wind. The early part of the night looked as beautiful to an inexperienced eye as it was possible to behold, but as the moon went down I noticed two or three little black fellows rising in the north-west. As

a light breeze came from the same quarter, and the mercury had been a little unsteady in the barometer, all indicated a breeze. About midnight it set in very strong, upon which, in consultation with the admiral, we decided at once to move the ship. The steam was got up, the anchor lifted, and to sea we went. At daylight we came round to this place, which we found a millpond: the chief himself finds it so agreeable that I fancy he will remain. We are not in the harbour, but in the bay outside, which forms a protection to its entrance. After breakfast I joined Sir Edmund in a ride over the ground of the late cavalry charges, where many carcases of the poor troopers' horses lay still unburied, marking the spot; then on to Lord Raglan's, where we took luncheon. It rained pretty sharply, but our capes saved our skins. We got back to dinner by six o'clock. The 'Bulldog' has just anchored from England with 150 Artillery, a valuable acquisition at this moment; right glad are they of any reinforcements, as the men already in the field have been hardly worked. . . .

"I am going this afternoon with Sir Edmund to visit an entrenched camp at the back of Balaklava, where I wish him much to go. A visit from him inspires confidence in the men and affords pleasure to the officers; besides, I have an opportunity when with him of pointing out many things of importance."

I find the following notes and description of the attack on the sea-defences of Sebastopol, written by my father under date 1863, probably in answer to questions asked him:—

"I know for certain that the allied generals pressed for the support of the fleet when the siege batteries were to open fire on October 17th, 1854, as it was fully hoped at the time that the Russian defences would be so damaged as to admit of the assault, hence it was most important that every man of the garrison should be kept at his post of

defence. I know also for certain that Admiral Dundas, whether reluctantly or not, did concur with his French colleague on the question of co-operating with the land forces on that day. With this object the 'Agamemnon' left Balaklava and proceeded round to the Katcha to join the fleets under Admirals Dundas and Hamelin. On our way round in the early morning we steamed close to the entrance of the harbour of Sebastopol, just out of gunshot, and when abreast of Fort Constantine we stopped, and Sir Edmund Lyons pointed out to me the exact spot in which he wished the ship to be placed on the day of the attack.

"The naval commanders-in-chief of the allied fleets having agreed as to the respective positions to be taken up by their ships, due preparation was made by us; topgallant masts were sent down, and boom-boats hoisted out and sent with all spare yards, booms, etc., to a steam transport.

"At about 7 a.m. on the morning of the 17th, observing no preparations being made on board the 'Britannia,' and seeing that Admiral Hamelin, with his *chef-d'état-major*, Captain Bouët-Willäümez, were on board her, Sir Edmund Lyons also went on board, to ascertain what was going on, when it came out that Admiral Dundas had decided 'not to risk his ships against stone walls.' It was rather late to come to such a decision, and so irritated Admiral Hamelin that he requested his boat and walked out of the cabin. Bouët-Willäümez lingered in the fore-cabin with Sir Edmund Lyons, to whom he put the question, 'What are we to expect, Admiral?' To which he replied, 'Leave it in my hands and all will be well.' This Sir Edmund Lyons told me, verbatim, as I have written it.

"By this time, the shore batteries being briskly engaged, the French fleet began to weigh to take up their position. Still no indication of a move on board the 'Britannia.'* At

* According to log of "Agamemnon" (see Appendix IX.), "Britannia" did not open fire till 2.32 p.m.

length the signal was made for all captains to repair on board, and I, of course, went, as did the others.

"Admiral Dundas was seated at a table in the fore-cabin with the chart before him. Sir Edmund and all the captains were standing round; a somewhat irritable discussion was going on as to the form of attack to be adopted, and the length of time that would elapse before the ships (though each had a steamer assigned to her) would get into action. Sir Edmund pressed for a straight line to the place assigned, instead of making a wide sweep, and indicated it with his forefinger on the chart, upon which Admiral Dundas said to him, 'I give you the "London" and "Sanspareil"; go and do as you like.' We jumped up in great delight at being released from so much talk on such a question.

"As we were leaving, the masters—Mainprize, of the 'Britannia,' and Nolloth, of the 'London'—who had sounded in at night under Fort Constantine, came to me and said, 'You are safe, Captain Mends, in running in up to six fathoms. When you get that, stop, or you will be on shore.' We had hardly got on board our ship again when the signal went up from the 'Britannia' to the 'Agamemnon,' 'Proceed and engage batteries.' The French fleet were by this time in position and had opened fire. We, *i.e.* 'Agamemnon' and consorts, at once weighed, and as the 'Sanspareil'* closed with us I noticed she had followed the old naval custom, and had a Union Jack at her forestay. We exchanged hearty cheers with her, and started at accelerated speed for our destination, and were soon under fire.

"We were most gallantly led in by the little tug 'Circassia,' commanded by a second master named Ball, sounding for us through a heavy fire, the lead-lines being cut by shot in the hands of the leadsmen on the little craft's paddle-boxes.

"Our old first lieutenant Rolland, who had been away at Constantinople on the sick list, rejoined us, to my great

* Captain Dacres.

delight, after we were under weigh, and though very weak and quite unfit for hard work, he nevertheless took his place on the quarter-deck, for the commander, Harry Hillyar, was in the trenches. The fire became very heavy as we went in. As soon as we got six fathoms I asked the admiral to stop. He hesitated a little and said, 'Let us get a little closer,' upon which I pointed out to him that we should soon ground and be unable to bring our broadside to bear. He then consented, and I stopped the engines and let go a stern anchor, which we had ready to check her way. We were then in five and a half fathoms, and as we swung her port broadside came to bear very nicely on Fort Constantine. We then dropped the bower anchor under our forefoot to keep us in position, and we hammered away.

"I had cautioned the officers of quarters to allow no indiscriminate or careless firing, but to aim steadily at the embrasures; but in a little time, the men getting somewhat excited, the admiral sanctioned my sounding the 'cease firing,' and I ran down for an instant (before they ceased) to the main deck, and found the captain of a gun taking no aim, upon which I was very angry and disrated him, which had a good effect on the others, for, when we presently resumed our fire, I could see that it was having a much more deadly effect.

"When we had been in action about half an hour our main fleet were beginning to get into their places, but all in a convex line from the harbour's mouth, and far too distant to have any effect on the forts.

"The 'Sanspareil' in taking her station astern of us drew a little too far ahead, so that we masked her foremost guns, and, at the end of an hour, Captain Dacres came on board and asked permission to 'shift berth,' which was granted. In moving she suffered very severely, as she got the full effect of the fire from the Wasp Fort and the earthworks, as well as that from Fort Constantine.

"The 'London' seeing the 'Sanspareil' moving, also moved out, but did not return, for some reason, whereas 'Sanspareil' gallantly came back and afforded us close support. For some time we two ships were left alone to endure a very heavy fire, upon which Sir Edmund remarked to me, 'We shall be dismasted if this goes on much longer. I won't go out, but they might give us a little support.' Whereupon I suggested hoisting No. 13 ('Close in for mutual support'). This was noticed by that gallant officer Captain Lewis Jones, of the 'Sampson,' who steamed out to the commander-in-chief, who could not see our signal for the smoke, and told him of our need. Upon which Admiral Dundas became impatient and said, 'What ship can I send?' 'A three-decker, sir,' was the reply. However, the 'Rodney,' Captain the Hon. C. Graham, was ordered in and came to our support most gallantly, taking up a position just ahead of us, with our bowsprits locking, and opened a tremendous fire on the fort, in doing which she grounded on the shoal, but without knowing it for some time.

"The 'Queen,' Captain Michell, and the 'Bellerophon,' Captain Lord George Paulet, also closed in to our support, followed by the 'Albion,' whose commander was acting for Captain Stephen Lushington, who was on shore in command of the naval brigade. The 'Queen' was quickly on fire in the neighbourhood of the fore magazine, and had to haul out of action, to the great regret of her gallant captain.

"After being engaged for some four hours, and the fire from the fort having been subdued, we came out, terribly knocked about aloft, and with a loss of four killed and some twenty-five wounded."

CHAPTER XV

1854

*“October 31st, 6 a.m.—*The weather has set in very fresh and cold, with the wind at north-west. I heartily pity our poor troops on the heights, yet there they must remain or take Sebastopol. We rode round our batteries and entrenchments at the back of Balaklava yesterday. Very perfect they are, and held by the Highland Brigade, the Marines, one line regiment, with seamen gunners in the batteries, commanded by Sir Colin Campbell. I have no fear for the place. I have omitted the Turks, who are 3000 strong, and are divided so as to have English on either side of 500. We hear that the French breaching batteries open to-day; very soon will follow the assault. Lord Dunkellin, of the Guards, who is dreadfully near-sighted, missed his way a few days since when going to the trenches at night, and walked directly into the Russian pickets. The officer, of course, took him prisoner, and we have been informed under a flag of truce that he was sent off to Moscow the following morning. His father, Lord Clanricarde, was a short time ago the ambassador at St. Petersburg, and a great friend of the Emperor. By a strange accident the very officer who took him was himself made a prisoner by us three days after. . . .

“There is not the smallest doubt that great procrastination has taken place on our side. A conclusion has just been arrived at that the army has been now five weeks before the place, of which two have been spent in laying regular

siege to an open town,* the defenders merely erecting earth-works for their defence as we do to attack; these said works are knocked about every day, and replaced on both sides every night. Be it known that when we first came before the place not a work of defence existed on this side. Surely it should have been at once assaulted; the Russian prisoners tell us it might have been carried instantly, such was the confusion prevailing, and so wonder-struck were they at the boldness and rapidity of our march. We sadly want a Wellington. My Lord Raglan is a charming private character, but no general whatever. Imagine half the army not even knowing him by sight, so little has he gone amongst the troops!

“10 *p.m.*—Sir Edmund, Cleeve, the flag-lieutenant, and myself set out at nine this morning on a visit to the front, and a most agreeable day we have had. The weather was fresh and bracing, with a brilliantly clear atmosphere, so that we could see distinctly everything in the city at our feet. Leaving Sir Edmund at Lord Raglan's, our first visit was on Colonel Montgomery, a connection of Cleeve's, our second to the Naval Brigade, where Moorsom gave us some bread and cheese, etc. Hore gave me an account of the death of poor Greathed. He was quite calm and collected to within a moment of death. His wound was very serious, rendering recovery impossible.

“All the bluejackets were very cheery, setting a good example to the grumbling redcoats. We next visited Sir G. Brown, gossiped with him awhile, and returned to the ship, making a tour of the entrenchments as we came. I am naturally, I think, of a very sanguine disposition, or I should be sadly disconcerted at the injudicious conversation held by men of high position in this army, the apathy of many, the ignorance of many, and the terrible croaking and grumbling of the majority. The Duke of Wellington had exactly the

* Sebastopol was not completely invested.

same to contend against in the Peninsula, and failed to put it down. The very same men, happily, are up at the sound of drum or bugle, and ready to go at anything they are asked to attack, fighting like demons. The least inaction gives them time to think over trifling disagreeables until they magnify them into great miseries. I do not mean to say there are no exceptions to this. There are many bright ones, but the prevailing characteristics of the British Army officers are—apathy bordering on indifference to all the details of their profession; slowness and helplessness almost infantile in everything that does not accord with barrack routine; honourable and gentlemanly as a general rule; gallant and chivalrous to an utter regardlessness of their own safety when called into action. The deeds of daring up to this moment would fill pages. Discipline in many instances is lost sight of, so that very great demoralization prevails; yet with all this they will carry Sebastopol, and carry it on their bayonets. I tell you all this for your own ear, not to be read to any non-belongings. . . .”

“*November 1st, 1854.*—A brilliant, beautiful day, so clear that everything seems magnified, so plainly do we see.

“Sir Edmund is gone off to Lord Raglan’s. He started at seven this morning. As I have allowed first lieutenant and master to go to the front, I have made myself ship-keeper; but it is so very fine that I intend to take a walk, after the men’s dinner, and meet the admiral on his return. A letter has been read to the Army from the Duke of Newcastle, by command of the Queen, thanking the Army under Lord Raglan, and the Navy under Sir E. Lyons, for the successful landing of the expedition, the victory of the Alma, and the subsequent exertions to alleviate the sufferings of the wounded. You will at once observe the omission of the name of Admiral Dundas, which is so pointed, and so remarkable, that the Government must hope so significant a hint to withdraw himself will be accepted.

I trust earnestly it may be so, for our country's sake, for our Navy's honour. But he is an old man, and I hope will plead declining years and health as reasons for resigning the command in the Mediterranean."

"*Thursday, 2nd, 6 a.m.*—A fresh, cold morning, which will touch up our poor fellows on the heights. I took a stroll on shore yesterday afternoon to look at some of the defences of Balaklava, and paid a visit to Sir Colin Campbell. I hear that he addressed the Highland Brigade the other day when they took up their position with him; short, pithy, and truly Scotch:—'Men, we'll just stop *here*, you know; we'll not go out of it, you know; we are come to defend the place, and we'll just die in it.' It was a pretty sight; the entrenchment commences on a high conical hill towering up to the sky, and runs down a ridge of declining hills in an irregular semi-circular form with the convex side towards the enemy, until it comes to the flat vale of Balaklava, which it caps, up to a knoll on which a redoubt with heavy guns stands, where also are Sir Colin's quarters."

"*3rd, 6 a.m.*—After breakfast Sir Edmund proposed my accompanying him to visit Lord Raglan. Whilst on our way there I heard guns behind us over Balaklava, but we thought it must have been the echo of those in the front; however, on reaching headquarters a trooper galloped up from Sir Colin to tell us that an attack was made upon his right. We all remounted immediately, and the staff rode to the position. We found that the Russians had attacked and driven in the Marine picket upon their trenches, and tried the range from two field guns they had got into position on the opposite height, under the fire of which some infantry were bold enough to advance, when my darling little 12-pounders were opened upon them with such effect that they broke and got behind the ridge as fast as their legs could carry them. This, being the Marines' first scrimmage, greatly

pleased and excited them. We did not dismount again until 5 o'clock, as the whole position was carefully examined. The value of it has been shown during the last few days, when the wind has been so strong that communication at the other port on the weather side has been nearly impossible."

"*'Agamemnon,' off Balaklava, November 4th, 1854.*—A dull, cloudy morning indicates the approach of winter. I wish I could recognize a little forethought in the preparations on shore to meet it; I much fear it will be here before the troops are hutted. The tents are beginning to show signs of wear; they are by no means suited for heavy rains, sleet, etc., accompanied, as these assuredly will be, by heavy gusts of wind on heights. I cannot make out Lord Raglan, he is the most imperturbable man that was ever seen; nothing moves him. A most important announcement of peril, or otherwise, does not induce a change in the expression of his face. As Sir Edmund was occupied preparing for the mail yesterday, I visited the heights by his desire; whilst there, up came General Canrobert and a numerous staff, also to see the preparations that had been made to keep out the enemy. He is a clever fellow and gallant, but so full of grimace and gesture that it is difficult to attach importance to what he says. The batteries in the front of Sebastopol were playing away heavily and, I heard, doing great execution. The Russians are in great force at the far end of the valley; all their movements are completely overlooked from our position, their marchings and countermarchings; they are busily preparing huts of bushes as though they did not intend to remain. Doubtless their plan is to attack us in rear as soon as the assault is made; but our position is so strong, and becoming daily stronger, that I do not think they can possibly force it.

"4 *p.m.*—It has been a rainy, gloomy day, though mild; I do not think it has been heavy enough to annoy the men at

the batteries much, or in their tents, and laying the dust will be beneficial. . . .

"I have had a long gossip with Sir Edmund on the poop, about our new ship and the conduct of the fleet; he protests against a Captain of the Fleet, says nothing will induce him to have one whilst I am with him; in fact is very kind. . . ."

"*Sunday, November 5th.*— . . . I had got so far, when the officer of the watch ran down to report that a very sharp fire was going on apparently at the back of Balaklava. I ran up and was soon convinced of the fact by the rapid succession of heavy firing, as well as field guns and volleys of musketry. I could not convince Sir Edmund of the seriousness of it, because he himself could not hear it.* However, breakfast was hurried; it was just over when a note came off from Heath, to say that the Russians were in very strong force and threatened an immediate attack. We got on shore as fast as we could, mounted our ponies, and rode to Sir Colin Campbell's redoubts, from which we saw masses of men drawn up at the far extremity of the plain; with cavalry thrown forward in the front and skirmishers out. We were informed that large bodies of men had advanced on the left, but turned to their right on receiving the fire of the French batteries round the ridge; that we had tried the range of one or two guns upon them without effect. Whilst we were being informed of this a very heavy fire of guns and musketry was going on in the direction of our right before Sebastopol, as if a great battle was being fought. We set forward our steeds as fast as possible, and soon picked up information that a very serious attack had been made by the Russians in great force upon the right of our position at six in the morning, which was still going on; that though we were driving them back, our loss had been very great. We pushed on to Lord Raglan's; he had been out for an hour and a half, but we got some little information which agreed tolerably with what

* Being slightly deaf.

we had already heard. We then pushed on with fresh ponies to the front, where the battle * was going on, in search of his lordship, as Sir Edmund was very desirous of seeing him. I was bent on keeping my chief out of fire, but he would go on, though the enemy's shells were bursting nearly over us. At length we discovered the grand staff of French and English generals, and rode up to them. As we passed along we met the wounded coming to the rear, some of them very cheery, especially the French; many too badly injured to notice anything. It seems that the enemy took advantage of a dark, cloudy morning, got guns up stealthily, and advanced in huge masses, driving in the pickets, and turning the rear of one of the batteries, which was defended until nearly every man in it was either killed or wounded. The alarm was soon given, and the bugle sounded to turn out; the regiments hurried up, formed line as they advanced to the front to meet these huge masses coming on covered by a desperate fire of artillery. Our guns soon came up, but no adequate force was on the ground to meet the overwhelming force of the Russians, who came on cheering and yelling. Our little bands, worthy of the old Romans, held their ground, charged with the bayonet, and checked the onset. Our gallant fellows were soon assisted by the other divisions coming on from the more distant part of the camp, and now began the deadly work. The Guards were driven out of a redoubt once, leaving two guns in it, but they outdid themselves in valour; they quickly formed again, advanced upon the work with a fearful impetuosity, and cleared it of every living enemy, filling it with Russian dead, with whom many of themselves were mingled. Regiment after regiment came up, poured in volley by volley, and charged with the bayonet through the masses, dealing out death and destruction. Very soon up came a French force to their assistance, which charged with them most nobly. Half of one of our batteries, consisting of

* Inkermann.

three field guns, had been captured, the men at them being overwhelmed and the horses killed ; an impetuous charge was made upon them, and they were quickly regained, the spikes withdrawn, and they opened fire again upon the enemy. At last they began to give way, leaving hundreds of dead, dying, and prisoners. Just at this point we arrived on the ground, and saw the Russians on the crest of the last ridge, holding to it with artillery, to which we for a time replied ; but the generals decided to cease from our side, upon which they also discontinued their fire. It was then decided on our part to drive them over the hill, back from whence they came, and our troops began to arrange themselves for the operation ; but the Russians, fearing the attack, quitted the position in all haste, leaving their ammunition wagons and some horses behind them ; they were soon in full retreat upon Sebastopol. Many of the prisoners were drunk ; the sober inform us that a *Te Deum* had been chanted. They were told that the Princes Nicholas and Alexander had arrived, that Heaven was with them, and success certain—poor fellows ! This repulse has been complete, but it has been dearly accomplished. The nation has to lament the loss of many a noble son ; mourning will be in many a home. Still duty called them on, and the Lord was on our side, or never could so small a number have defeated so mighty a host. It turns out to be a *corps d'armée*, just arrived from the Danube, only two days here, consequently not impressed with the respect due to British and French arms ; these, added to the force already here, made one desperate effort, which has been so gloriously repulsed. The return of killed, wounded, and missing had not come in when Sir Edmund quitted headquarters. We know of many ; no less than *seven* generals killed or wounded. The gallant Sir George Cathcart fell shot through the heart ; General Strangways, of the Artillery, died soon after his leg was shot off ; our old shipmate, Sir George Brown, I brought off with

a rifle-ball through his left arm, just above the elbow ; it spent itself on his left breast, just over his heart, and fell harmless. He lost much blood before he could get to the rear, and very nearly fell from his horse. Generals Adams, Pennefather, Bentinck, and one other, wounded severely ; the Duke of Cambridge's horse killed under him ; General Buller two horses killed, Lord Paulet Somerset one horse under him. These I know of ; of course many will be reported to-morrow. The Russian dead lay in heaps of hundreds ; never was such a sight witnessed. The Guards, after charging four times with the bayonet, laid about them with their butts. In fact the heroism of our troops is marvellous. I got on board with Sir G. Brown at five o'clock.

"Sir Edmund left the ship for headquarters this morning.

"Sir George Brown is doing very well. He and his three aides-de-camp are on board, and glad we are to have them. Young men must be pushed up into the place of the old, who have so nobly done their work. . . ."

"7th, 6 a.m.—I landed yesterday afternoon, and met the poor wounded coming down to be embarked. This attack of the Russians upon our position and the repulse they met with will give you a better idea of Englishmen than anything perhaps ever written. There is little doubt that we were taken by surprise, to the everlasting discredit of Lord Raglan. Thrice was a fearful assault made upon the position by the great host, each time with fresh men, amounting to 60,000. For a long time *three* British regiments bore the brunt of it ; the Guards, single-handed, for nearly one hour. Nine of the officers of the Coldstreams were put into one grave yesterday morning, and every officer is wounded. Our loss has been immense—1650 wounded, 400 killed—but the enemy ! I am told the ground was so covered with dead and dying yesterday morning that over acres it was difficult to walk without stepping on them ; it is estimated at 8000 by French and English officers. We ought to

have reinforcements immediately from home. Turks arrive daily, but we are as well without them: they are not the Turks of old memory; they ran from the guns entrusted to their keeping the other day. Another brigadier-general is dead of his wounds, a gallant man and great loss; but Sir G. Cathcart is considered the greatest of all. Fresh troops are anxiously looked for; delay is lamentable at this important moment. I am naturally of a sanguine temperament in all things connected with the profession, but the sad apathy, the vast amount of mismanagement, the inconceivable delay that has taken place, the utter ignorance of some in authority, shake my confidence in the commander-in-chief to such a degree that it is impossible to calculate upon success. Never since the world was made has such an armament, so costly in its material, such superb ships, such magnificent troops, been entrusted to any generals or admirals, and I suppose never was an armament so much left to chance. The expedition was complete; the landing, though mismanaged as much as possible by the naval commander-in-chief, was nevertheless successfully accomplished by the indomitable perseverance, energy, and zeal of men and officers of both services. A brilliant action ending in a great victory soon followed the disembarkation, proving that everything requisite had been landed. The Russian hosts were completely discomfited and panic-stricken; a masterly march was certainly accomplished, adding fresh dismay to the enemy. And yet of this no advantage was taken! The Engineers smiled disdainfully when earthworks were talked of as being thrown up by the Russians, until very extensive works appeared, when on a sudden Sir John Burgoyne discovers that they are very formidable, quite as much so as those we are throwing up to oppose them, with heavier guns in them than we could bring against them. Then it is suddenly discovered by the heads that Balaklava is unprotected, though common-sense men foresaw it from

the first. An attack is made upon it, which is gallantly repelled by British valour, with great loss. Then work cannot be hard enough to make up for lost time, and the men are fagged day and night throwing up entrenchments, but that position is safe. The right of our grand position attacked the day before yesterday was reported by Sir de Lacy Evans, a good soldier, to Lord Raglan three weeks ago as untenable if not better protected; yet it remained the only part of the position where entrenchments had not been thrown up; and see the result. British blood is shed like water and valour unsurpassed in history displayed, but where is the general's credit? None! I, for one, think the neglect lamentable. We might have been in possession of Sebastopol four weeks ago, and now we are further off, because we want a genius, a master mind. I am no croaker, but I want to see more energy and less twaddling, when blood and treasure are so lavished. Works are now begun on our right. Canrobert held up his hands in surprise when he saw its unprotected state. Reinforcements are come in to the enemy, who draw from inexhaustible resources, whilst we only get a few wretched Turks. Oh! if our 7000 were here.

"We must soon look for bad weather and cold; the thing ought to be done at once, *must* be done, or France and England's honour will be tarnished, and the war lengthened to recover ourselves. You will be glad to hear that Sir Edmund has applied for the appointment of Fellowes to the 'Royal Albert,' and one or two others I have named. . . .

"I took a stroll on shore with Cleeve, and ascertained our exact loss. It is as follows: Total killed, 450; wounded, 1718; missing, 148. The loss of the Russians it is almost impossible to arrive at; the experienced say 12,000 killed and wounded. Generals Canrobert and Pennefather, two of the best judges, say 20,000. Three thousand lay dead on the hill in front of our camp and at the base of it, as

well as in the valley ; they lay in heaps, a frightful scene to witness, I am told. The Russians were drunk, and fought like savages, bayoneting our wounded as they lay on the ground. Our men are greatly enraged, their blood is up, and they will give no quarter if that be the game. The generals have written to Mentschikoff to complain of such brutality, as well as to point out to him that this is a second instance in which the Russians have not sent in under a flag of truce to bury their dead. This has been a horrid carnage, but they must not encounter Englishmen if they expect less. The French do not hesitate to express astonishment at such extraordinary valour ; it will give La Grande Nation a wholesome respect for our arms."

"8th, 6.30 a.m.—A long consultation of generals was held yesterday, and more vigorous measures decided upon than even those hitherto adopted. Sir Edmund is as usual the mentor of the council-board ; he sees things at a glance that soldiers do not dream of. Reinforcements begin to come in. French troops have arrived, and recovered men are returning from Scutari. The *Times* does not express itself sufficiently strongly on the state of the hospitals or the attendance on the wounded. It is impossible to conceive anything worse, though Dr. Guthrie is trying to bolster the matter up. All looks well on paper, as many other things have done, but what are the facts? . . .

"I scarcely know what name will be given to the battle of the 5th, which reflects such honour on the British army and their allies ; it was a repulse with a loss on both sides that has never been equalled in one fight. I am happy to say the steamer 'Prince' has arrived with a fresh regiment, but we want many to make up for the loss the army has sustained by disease and the enemy. This arrival is, however, opportune, and will do good. A board of field officers is to sit to-day to examine witnesses as to the fact of a Russian major having stabbed our wounded

officers and men when they were lying on the ground, and compelled his men to do it also. A gibbet should be erected in front of Sebastopol, to which he should be hanged if satisfaction be not immediately given. All the evidence and correspondence must be published to convince Europe that we have a ferocious savage to encounter in the refined Czar and his army. We must never cease to harass him until he is humbled; as to allowing him any trade or a neutral vessel to carry any Russian produce, 'tis a folly. He must not have a vessel on the sea, or a sea border for commerce or for embarkation of troops, that can be destroyed. Odessa should be burnt down, as it is now only of use for the embarkation of troops, and a dépôt for military stores. We must hold our own here until the place falls, whilst England and France have a man to spare. Let army and navy but be governed or directed with vigour and energy, and we will accomplish anything permitted to man. . . ."

"*November 10th.*—I have been called up by the admiral to read a note that has been sent to him by —, who commands in the port, from Sir Colin Campbell, who commands the troops for the defence of the works before Balaklava, telling him that an attack would probaby be made upon the place this morning. — is an alarmist. I have written to him by Sir Edmund's desire, to say that 'if an attack is intended it is fortunate that we have had such timely notice.'

"In the afternoon I landed with Sir Edmund, was well mounted, and rode round the defences threatened this morning. The Marines turned out and gave the admiral three times three cheers as we passed along their line of tents, telling him they would stick to their posts to the last, which I have little doubt of. A small body was engaged the other day in that hard fight, and behaved nobly, as they ever do. I am happy to say that some fresh troops have arrived, French as well as English, but we certainly need

more; 'tis greatly to the discredit of the Government that they are not coming in in larger numbers at this moment. I fancy Lord Raglan led them to think we should be in possession before this. What a blessing will peace be after all this! and yet there seems no prospect of it. It is confidently said that Sir Edmund is to go to the Baltic next year; he has heard of it in private letters; he says he prefers this command, but will take his chance. . . .

"This is a bad day for our poor fellows in the camp, but they will have so many much worse that it is useless bestowing pity now. Lord Raglan, *toujours calme*, as Marshal St. Arnaud described him in his despatch after the Alma, is more than calm; he requires to have everything shaken out of him. Our poor troops are, in their privations and sufferings, giving a painful example of the inefficiency of the generals and the unfitness of the British army to take the field for a campaign. They evidently expected to come out here, fight a desperate battle or two, carry Sebastopol, and return in comfort to England, instead of which the operations have been sluggish, advantage has never been made the most of after defeating the enemy, and here they are quite unprepared for the winter either in shelter or clothing. What I most dread is a want of confidence arising among the men; if that takes place we shall have disaster."

"*November 11th, 1 a.m.*—I have not been in bed yet, as it has been blowing a strong gale right into the bay, with a very heavy sea. I have been lying down on deck abaft the funnel, keeping my eyes warm between the squalls. The steam is up and we go on very easily with the screw to relieve the cables of a portion of the strain. The wind has been gradually drawing round, so as to be off instead of on the land; this puts us broadside on to the sea that was ahead, and we are tumbling about very much in consequence: there go all my boots and shoes in the rack; it wasn't

secured, consequently they will be abroad in all directions. The 'Miranda'* arrived this evening; it was delightful to see the meeting between father and son; the former was in such a state of excitement he could not wait a moment, but had a boat manned long before she anchored to bring him on board, where he still is with others who came to dinner, for the gale came on during dinner and none could get back to their ships. He told me the moment he came up the side that he saw you, just before he left, quite well; it was just before you were taken ill. I am happy to say that he has part of a regiment on board and announces others *en route*. I think I must get to bed, though I scarcely expect to sleep while she tumbles about so. Good-night.

"10 a.m.—What a night we have had of it, such a terrible sea running; but what has it been compared with the discomfort of the camp. There I can picture to myself tents blowing down, bedding wet through, wood too wet to make a fire for cooking a meal; in fact, who would be a soldier who could be a sailor? We have our perils, but we have a roof over us always, and are sure of a meal. During peace they have the pull of us, because they are, so to speak, always at home with their wives; but during war it is a sad business."

"*Sunday, November 12th, off Chersonese.*—It came on to blow again this morning so hard that we thought it advisable to come round here under the lee, where we are in comparative comfort. We had hoisted our boats out to bring provisions from the 'Stromboli,' but were obliged to send them into harbour and leave them in charge of the 'Sanspareil.' It is fine, fresh, and clear; a strong south-east wind. In these times of hard war we seldom or never are able to attend to the duties of the Sabbath day. I have only attended divine service once during the past five weeks,

* Commanded by Sir Edmund's son.

so surely does something of vast importance occur to prevent it. There is great comfort in the reflection that the prayers of many righteous men are offered up for our success. Winter will soon be here in full force. I see there is no help but to face it cheerfully, and I confess I am ready to submit to almost anything to humble the wily northern savage. If we but destroy this stronghold, we shall throw him back years in this part of the world."

"13th, 6 *a.m.*—Winter seems to have thrown its shroud over us, not in great severity, but rain and gloom prevail; not, however, so gloomy as a rainy November day in London. I have so completely made up my mind to six hard months that I hope not even to be *ennuyé* by it, though I confess I shall feel for the poor fellows in the camp. As there seems to be no longer any prospect of an attack upon the batteries by the ships, I shall make my cabin as snug as I can with carpet, etc. . . .

"Just as we sat down to dinner last evening, when it was dark, a very sharp fire of all arms, guns—mortars, rockets, and musketry—commenced at this end of the French lines. It was very pretty to look at, and as we know there is seldom much loss in night attacks, we had no morbid feeling about the number of poor fellows knocked over.

"I rejoice to say that reinforcements have been pouring in; 6000 French have arrived and 2500 English, the latter fully making up the loss in the last action. We know of others coming also; this is charming. . . .

"11 *a.m.*—Sir Edmund is gone on shore to book passage in the 'Miranda,' which came so close to us that she carried away her mizzen-mast against our jib-boom, which she also broke. It luckily has fallen in the right place; had anybody else done it, there would have been a terrible taking. I much fear the Russians made a successful sortie yesterday evening and spiked the French guns, as none are firing this

morning. I have had my carpet put down ; the cabin looks quite comfortable with it. . . .

"We expect some of the heavy sailing ships will be ordered home, to be replaced by screws, as best suited to this sea in the winter, which certainly is unsafe without steam. . . ."

"Off Sebastopol, November 15th, 1854.—I have been too full of anxiety and too fagged to say a word to you since the day before yesterday, when I closed my last letter. The afternoon of that day came with threatening weather, but the barometer rose, a clear starlight night ensued, and with a second anchor down I felt quite at ease. Towards morning the sky became suddenly overcast, the barometer began to fall rapidly, and the wind drew to the south. By eight violent squalls came on, increasing in strength up to ten o'clock until nearly at hurricane pitch. I do not think I have ever seen it blow so hard. Being off the land up to this time, I had no great anxiety, but it suddenly veered to the west, or directly in from seaward, with a very heavy sea.

"I soon had a third anchor down, and kept the engines going to ease the cables, which, thanks to James Watt, enabled the good ship 'Agamemnon' to ride easily. Many wrecks of small French transports occurred near us ; painful to witness because of our utter inability to assist the poor crews, many of whom I fear suffered. It is now quite fine and we have only the legacy in the shape of a swell, which is also subsiding. I much pitied the poor troops yesterday—snow, hail, and sleet accompanied the squalls, which were too violent for the tents, accordingly the whole army was roofless. I see them all up again now, and a good sun will do wonders.

"I scarcely quitted the deck until midnight, and I got into bed at three this morning. One of our steam tenders, the 'Danube,' is on the rocks in the little harbour, I fear with little chance of being got off. How she managed it I cannot

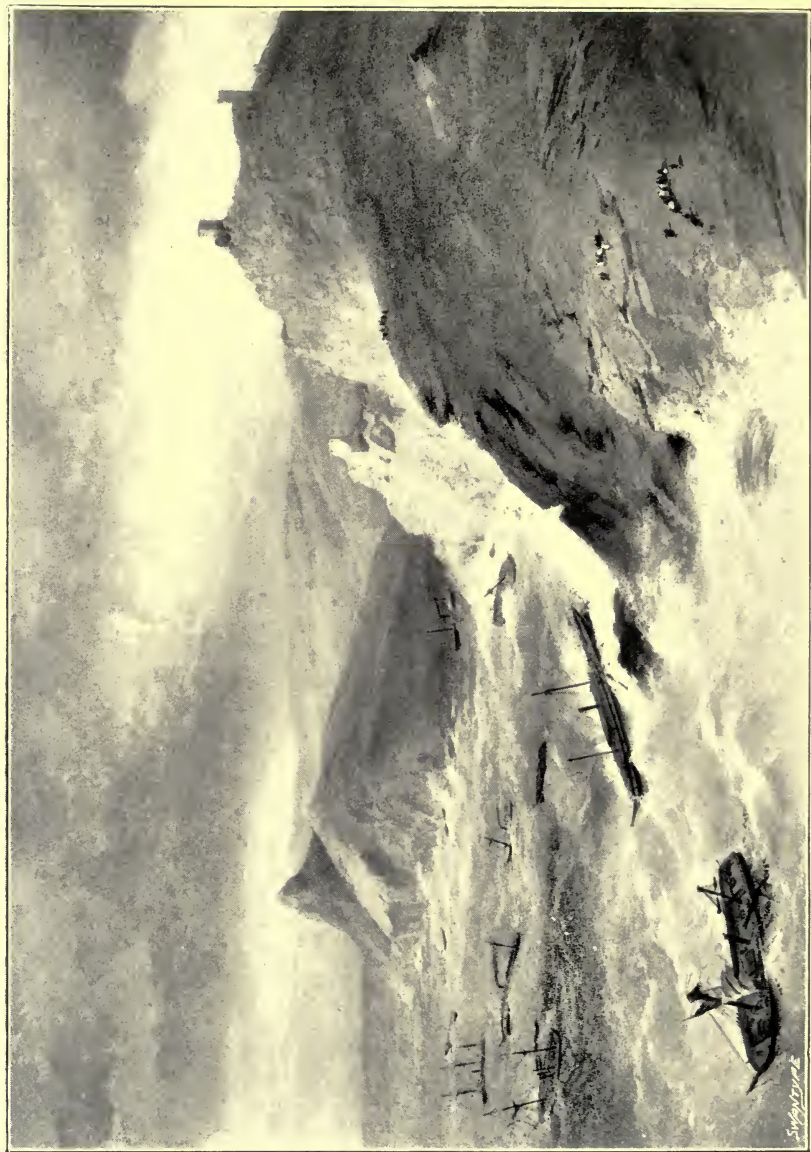
tell, unless her commanding officer anchored her badly. I hope Sir Edmund will let me go to sea in such times; there I should have no anxiety, but in an open roadstead, of which little is known, it is an anxious affair. . . .

"I expect a hard winter of it. The 'Algiers' came up from the Katscha in the evening. Captain Talbot has been on board, and reports that the ships were in considerable danger there during the gale yesterday; that his own ship was nearly lost in consequence of parting an anchor; that five of our fine transports were wrecked and several other smaller vessels, amounting in all to fourteen; that the 'Sampson' was dismasted and a Turkish ship of the line. Whether it might have been prevented or not I cannot say, but I think a little forethought might have saved property and life. I have not heard of Balaklava, but I am very anxious to know how the ships outside fared; to those in that singular little harbour no harm could accrue beyond the rubbing against each other, but there must have been a very heavy sea outside. It is scarcely like a Malta creek, though the two sides are in parts almost as precipitous from the water, but it is *tortuous, narrow, deep*, terminating in a flat beach, from which runs up a valley, broad and large, amounting to a plain, on which the celebrated though injudicious charge of cavalry was made not long ago. The Russians have since enquired who led it.

"The admiral has not returned to us yet; I suppose he thinks it well to keep on the right side of the surf. . . ."

"*November 16th, 6 a.m.*—I am ever tempted to commence a long gossip with you when I get up, but I find I leave so short a time for Whitmore to dress that I must not yield to the desire. . . .

"*9 a.m.*—I fear the good people at home are ill prepared for the list of disastrous wrecks that occurred during the gale of Tuesday. The 'Algiers' came up from Katscha last evening having lost one anchor, Captain Talbot says nearly



THE GALE—OUTSIDE BALAKLAVA. LOSS OF S.S. "PRINCE."

From a picture by W. Simpson, Esq. Messrs. Colnaghi & Co.

the ship. He told us of fourteen wrecks in that bay alone, five of them fine English transports; that the 'Sampson' had been completely dismasted by ships getting foul of her as they drifted past; that a Turkish ship of the line had cut away her masts to save herself. I found on heaving in on one of our cables just now, that the anchor had gone and that we had ridden out the gale with one on a great scope of cable. How mercifully are we cared for in the midst of disasters! I have had a note from the admiral in which he tells me that nearly all the transports anchored outside the harbour of Balaklava also have been wrecked, and only thirty men saved. The 'Prince,' a fine new steamer, just arrived, is among the number totally lost. We have still to hear from Eupatoria, where I fear matters are far worse, as the holding ground is not so good."

"*Friday, November 17th.*—I have been employed upon doings and undosings all day; we were ordered to weigh and proceed to Balaklava; when weighed we were ordered not to go, but anchor again; and this evening off came our chief to dinner, who, with all his fine, noble qualities, has been a little spoilt by good fortune. Cleeve and myself sometimes find him difficult on different points, so exactly is his humour apt to turn to suit the caprice of the moment. In so fine a character in other respects, however, these things are trifles light as air. The list of wrecks and damaged vessels is seriously large; no less than forty-two vessels have been lost to England and France, amounting in value, I should think, to three times that of all we have taken from the enemy. A fine ship of the line, 'Henri Quatre,' totally lost at Eupatoria, with the steamer 'Pluton'; one Turkish ship of the line totally wrecked there also; 'Sampson' and 'Retribution' dismasted, as well as several merchant steamers, and much loss of life. Poor old Captain Baynton—Mrs. Winter's uncle, I think—was lost in the 'Prince'; and many, very many fine fellows have perished. God

knows when such catastrophes will end whilst those whose duty it is to look to it are so lamentably deficient in professional knowledge. I grieve to see it. The nation's loss is great; her sons are sacrificed wantonly, and her credit becomes tarnished; but yet such is the mysterious net of government that she never knows why or how it is. Parliament makes a fuss; men get up who know nothing practically of the question they are discussing and make the most absurd speeches, which are ridiculed far and near, and talked down by Government members who know exactly the *pros* and *cons*. There must be something very rotten in our system when such things can be. The 'Valorous' left this morning early in a great hurry with despatches, carrying Mr. Layard as the bearer of them, with, I have no doubt, urgent demands upon the home Government. I assure you I almost weep over the lamentable display of professional ignorance, apathy, indifference in some and opposition in a few. This morning, to our amazement, the Russians brought another ship of the line to the mouth of the harbour, where they sank her and cut away her masts; it appeared to be done hurriedly, as though they feared or looked for an attempt to force the entrance in such weather as the other day. Perhaps it was that they fancied a breach had been made in their barrier by the gale; whatever it be, it is very strange so to ruin their own harbour.

"I have had a very nice note from Pelham, rejoicing with and congratulating me on my doings. It is most grateful from him, and a satisfaction to me to feel that he is satisfied he did not exert himself for an unworthy member of the profession. I cannot tell you how pleased I was to get it. Good-night. I have to be up early, as we weigh at daylight for Balaklava.

"Eden, of the 'London,' is invalided, and Jones, of the 'Sampson,' takes her; Dacres, of the 'Sanspareil,' is also invalided, and Heath gets her acting vacancy; both admirable appointments if permitted at home.

" 1.30 *p.m.*.—I see several of the French ships have lost their rudders in the late gale ; two three-deckers are quite *hors de combat*, and I am sorry to say that they have this day heard of the wreck of the 'Jena,' another fine ship of the line. As the wind set in fresh from the east and south-east, we have come back to our anchorage off the harbour. We look directly in upon all the Russian ships snugly laid up for the winter, laughing at us in one sense, but surely crestfallen somewhat.

"We must now wait for more guns, powder, shot, and shell, as well as stores to make our men snug for the winter. French troops arrive daily, and we hear of the approach of English reserves. I bear anything with cheerfulness, so that Sebastopol falls, but that must be, or the world will not be safe."

CHAPTER XVI

1854

*"Off Sebastopol, November 20th, 1854, 5.30 a.m.—*Gloomy weather and a low barometer following on disastrous wrecks during the last gale are not inspiriting subjects: therefore I am not over-bright. I am too full of anxiety for my own charge, as well as that the supplies of the army should be kept up.

"Noon.—Rain, rain, rain! I hope it is for that the glass lowered, and not for wind; we had enough of that last week for a time.

"Sir Edmund is making himself comfortable upstairs, I am glad to see, for really his cabin was quite the reverse. We have been arranging a plan for the transports together for Lord Raglan's guidance, and I hope I have succeeded in getting a proper plan for Balaklava harbour. Eden, of the 'London,' left in the 'Banshee.' He is not likely to return again. . . .

"I surely have mentioned Fred's* nephew more than once. He is a clever, intelligent lad, but there is great fear of his being spoilt. Sir Edmund never moves without him, and will bring him forward without doubt. He puts me in mind of a young gull. His voice is sharp and squeaky, and he flies about in such a state of excitement that it is quite amusing to see him. I like him, on the whole, but I have a great horror of a spoilt midshipman. He is very nice-looking, and grown tall."

* His brother-in-law, Frederick Green,

" *November 22nd, Balaklava.*—We came here yesterday for our boats, left behind on Sunday week. The scene here is very painful in fact, and on reflection. The rocks are covered with the remains of wrecked ships in the smallest possible pieces. The fact is painful, I say, indeed ; but when I reflect that it is owing in the main to the incapacity of those who have the conduct of that part of the expedition, it is trebly painful. Captain —— is responsible for the whole. To him very earnest appeals were absolutely made by some of the captains of ships either to be sent to sea or taken into harbour, but not to be left in a dangerous outer roadstead. How his conscience sits now it is not easy to say. He is one of those phlegmatic Scotchmen not easily moved, and I dare say he saddles others with his own responsibilities.

" 10 *a.m.*—Whilst the decks are undergoing a cleaning, late though it be for such a performance, I keep out of the way, having had my share of dabbling.

" Sir Edmund is gone off to headquarters to advise, consult, and urge on the authorities. I really know not what might not happen if he were not here, but the whole system is bad. Admiral Dundas is very jealous of him, won't consult with him, and does stupid things without him. The heads of departments under Lord Raglan are also jealous of his having the ear of their head, who generally follows the advice he receives from him, which compels *them* to work harder. He, moreover, points out before them the many blunders they commit, as well as their inaction. He rather regrets his newspaper popularity just now, as there is ever reaction. The *Morning Herald* is attempting a bungling defence of his *protégé*, which will, of course, call down truths from other papers tending to his disadvantage. I landed with Cleeve yesterday afternoon. As we pulled in it required care to steer the boat clear of pieces of wreck, the surface of the harbour and bay near the entrance being literally covered with fragments. All, or nearly all, the trees are blown down ;

this shows it to have been more of a hurricane than a common gale. The little place was as muddy as could be, and everything looked pretty miserable except the 'Mark Tapley' faces, which fortunately were numerous, under certainly disadvantageous circumstances. The harbour itself is crammed with shipping, many dismasted and much injured by the gale. We walked out of the place to one of the batteries in the entrenchments, where a detachment of 'Vengeance's' marines is quartered. They told us marvellous tales of the commencement of the hurricane, which began with them at five in the morning. The tents were all blown down in one sweep. One was lifted into the air on the highest peak, and carried in the direction of the storm a mile, falling into a valley. The bearskin caps of the Guards, which had been hanging at the tent-poles, were taken up in a whirl of wind, and blown here, there, and everywhere to inconceivable distances. Imagine the discomfort of the poor fellows during that day and following night, with not a thing belonging to them dry, their blankets in some instances blown away entirely. Heavy empty shot-boxes were hurled aloft like feathers, inflicting serious bruises among the men. Many have suffered severely from being blown down and bruised. Fortunately, fresh men are landing, but they succumb to climate because not inured. The spirits of all are, nevertheless, good—I mean all in health—but many show harass and fatigue. There is this comfort in it all, that our enemies are worse off than ourselves. Their harbour is useless to them for supplies or anything; their roads are very bad for the conveyance of supplies to so large an army, and the Crimea is too thinly populated to afford them much; whilst we have ports and steamers to bring the best of food, of which, on enquiry yesterday, I find there is no lack, except hay for the poor horses, as nearly all that has been lost."

"23rd, 5 a.m. *At Sea*.—As the weather looked unpleasant,

and the barometer lowered yesterday, I determined upon weighing, and awaiting the admiral under weigh. At one, therefore, I had the steam up, and soon after the anchor; stood close in to the harbour's mouth; at five, picked up my chief, and we have a delicious night at sea, free from all anxiety. . . .

"Yesterday a Mr. Simpson, an artist, came on board, introduced to Sir Edmund, and sent out by Captain Hamilton for the purpose of illustrating the doings of the 'Agamemnon' for the gratification of the good people at home. He is to take several striking scenes, all of which I shall put myself down for, as they are subjects for history: the disembarkation, the *Alma*, the attack on the forts, the *Inkermann*, the capture of Balaklava, in which we participated, etc. . . .

"9 a.m.—As the breeze is strong, and weather doubtful, there is every probability of a speedy closing of the mail bag, therefore I shall put my letter up at once. The shaking of the screw prevents my writing almost. . . ."

"*Off the Katscha, November 24th, 1854.*—We were on our way here when I closed yesterday. Our object is to receive provisions from the three-decked ships that are to go to the Bosphorus for the bad months, leaving guns, men, etc., behind for a heavier attack on the fortress. I have committed a piece of extravagance since my last; an artist sent out by Colnaghi, under the patronage of the Admiralty, came on board, just as we were leaving Balaklava, with a few sketches and a prospectus of a series of plates to illustrate the remarkable events in this war here, and as he is specially sent to Sir Edmund's care, in order that the 'Agamemnon's' doings may be brought prominently forward, I have put my name down for a series in eight parts, the series to consist of thirty-two coloured engravings, for £8. Some of the greater events, such as the naval attack upon the batteries, and the battle of the *Alma*, are to be on separate sheets apart from the series,

at twelve shillings each. I think they will be valuable to our children. Cleeve intends putting himself down for a set. In fact, everybody will, I fancy, belonging to this ship. Mr. Simpson brought with him two or three of the views he had taken, which were very good indeed. He was very desirous to see the outside of Balaklava from the 'Agamemnon's' deck, in order that he might make a sketch of her co-operating with the forces in the attack and capture of the place.

"Imagine Admiral Dundas saying to Sir Edmund yesterday, 'Well, it will be *impossible* to keep up a rapid postal communication by steam during the winter; I have written to Lord Raglan to tell him so.' The reply was, 'It must be done, sir; you have abundance of steamers at your command; the people of England are paying largely and willingly for the war, and *will* be informed. The Duke of Newcastle writes to Lord Raglan that he is to apply to Admiral Dundas for a vessel to convey even the report that *nothing* has occurred, and I have urged Lord Raglan myself never to omit an opportunity of writing as well as sending every two or three days, if necessary, in order to allay the fears and anxieties of the friends of those serving in this war, who would readily pay the expenses themselves rather than not hear.' Can you imagine such a mind as that of the naval commander-in-chief? I do not fear; right will be done. Captain Graham has been invalided. Captain King, of the 'Leander,' has been offered her; this is a good move in the right direction. . . ."

November 26th, 5.30 a.m.—The climate here is very like that of Plymouth, dark, heavy in appearance, plenty of rain with strong winds, I mean for the month of November; but on board the ship herself gloom is not known, the cheery spirit of the admiral pervades everybody, and cheerful countenances prevail. What a meagre, wretched despatch is that of our commander-in-chief on the attack of the 17th ult.

What a shameful thing that he should have said not a word in behalf of those gallant officers and men who so nobly did their duty, aye, and more than their duty, in approaching the enemy nearer than he was *pleased* to do, or had arranged for."

"27th, 6.30 a.m.—I am amused to hear how Sir Edmund's letters have told in England, and how oddly high personages, up to Her Most Gracious Majesty, have received from him, and him only, the account of the part taken by the navy in the first attack. The 'Rodney,' when sent in to assist us, touched the shoal, and was for a little time in some peril. The commander-in-chief thought it right to order a court of enquiry, hearing which Sir Edmund wrote Captain Graham one of his stunning letters, in order that he might produce it in his defence. No enquiry taking place, Captain Graham enclosed it to his brother, the First Lord, who, in order to prove to Her Majesty that he had not selected an unworthy officer in his brother to be one of her aides-de-camp, laid it before Her Majesty, who was much pleased with the account, as being the only one she had seen—the despatch from the commander-in-chief having been written by '*Aunt Betsy*,'* and being perfectly bare of all details. The dissatisfaction in the fleet is very general. I have read in the *Times* of November 4th Mentschikoff's report of the campaign up to this period, and very good it is, less bombastic and more truthful than Russian bulletins have hitherto been. I wonder what he will say of the murderous affair of the 5th? We are all anxious to see that, the most disastrous that has taken place to the Russian arms and with more serious casualties to ours. I hear the troops are growing very impatient to make the assault, almost discontented at not doing it. . . .

"10.30 p.m.—The weather has suddenly changed from mild

* A nickname given by the men and officers of the fleet to a military guest of Admiral Dundas.

temperature and southerly gales to a keen, cold, clear north-east wind with frost.

"We have got a Russian captain of artillery on board. He waits here to know if he will be accepted in exchange for Lord Dunkellin. He is a noisy, vulgar specimen; I hear him now holding forth in the wardroom. I am glad to see the tone of the English papers; the *Times* is pressing for reinforcements, which should have been sent on the arrival in England of the news of the field of Alma. They now come very late, when those here have been overworked. In the *Illustrated London News* of the 13th is a good sketch of the 'Agamemnon' engaging the batteries; it was done by the flag-lieutenant and is very correct. Beneath it is an exact copy of the double-headed shot that very nearly demolished me, also done by him. All the plans in the same paper, showing the position of the ships, you readily perceive, are copies of the one I sent to you. You do not tell me if you ever received the plan of the Alma on thin paper done for me by Spratt. Many vessels have arrived at Balaklava with stores, clothing, ammunition, guns, mortars, men, and now that we have fine weather, or a prospect of it, we shall do. The new ordnance must be placed in position and a smashing fire kept up before storming. All *the heavies* leave to-morrow for the Bosphorus. 'Britannia,' 'Queen,' 'Trafalgar,' 'London,' are going there for the winter; 'Rodney,' 'Vengeance,' 'Bellerophon,' 'Sanspareil,' and ourselves remain here."

"28th, 6 a.m.—I have managed to complete my toilette to-day and have half an hour's spare time before we weigh.

"I fancy that as soon as we have taken up this anchor, which the 'Trafalgar' has left for us in lieu of the one lost during the gale, we shall run round to Balaklava.

"Troops are landing hourly from France and supplies pouring in, but due preparation has not been made to meet the severe cold, I fear; in fact, the want of foresight astounds me."

"*Off Sebastopol, November 29th, 6 a.m.*—I have commenced early dressing—I begin at five, and am ready for all the events of the day, happen when they may. Sir Edmund is up every morning at six—he writes until a quarter after seven, and is like clockwork at the breakfast-table; nothing so puts him out as a slow assemblage *there*, because he says it always betokens laziness. Coles, the flag-lieutenant, has done four very excellent views of the naval attack, dedicating each view to those particularly conspicuous in it; as 'Agamemnon,' accompanied nearly the whole time by 'Sanspareil,' is remarkable in all, it involves an outlay for the whole. The five large ships actually made a start last evening, but the wind failing, were compelled to anchor again. The officers on board them are very low-spirited at being sent from the scene at such a moment; however, such heavy ships, being without steam, are worse than useless here: they cause much anxiety and require constant attendance. We hear those philanthropic ladies with the nurses are in full work at Scutari; what a blessing to the poor wounded. The battle of the Inkermann provided them with abundance of work, unluckily; they must have arrived just in time to meet them going down from this. How noble! how praiseworthy! how truly self-denying! No emblem, no badge, no outward gewgaw of affected sanctity, but an inmost heart firm and true, with a fervent Christian spirit; it is very noble of them."

"*November 30th, 6 a.m.*—As soon as the large ships left yesterday, the commander-in-chief, who has hoisted his flag in the 'Furious,' quitted this anchorage for one of the little bays near the French, at the head of which he purposes ensconcing himself during the remainder of his reign, which cannot last much longer. He has left Sir Edmund here without any orders, and three large ships, viz., 'Algiers,' 'Rodney,' 'Vengeance,' also the 'Terrible' and 'Sphinx,' similarly circumstanced. I suppose the object is if possible

to push Sir Edmund out of the councils of Lord Raglan, to whom, as well as to the 'cause,' he is so essential. It is thought most unwise for him to retire as it were so completely from his fleet; he will not even be seen by the ships, and it will be very difficult for captains to hold communication with him. We have an enormous force of small active vessels, well commanded by men who have everything to gain; we are at war with an enemy who has a very large seaboard and much trade going on at this very moment. We neither try to harass the coast nor interrupt the trade, so that they must really smile in their sleeves at our imbecility. Supplies can at this moment be on their way to Sebastopol along roads which our cruisers could stop, and still not an effort is made. Trade goes on with Odessa as heretofore; whilst blood and treasure are flowing almost *ad infinitum* from England and France. I am no croak, but I want to see energy and wisdom displayed; our country demands them; England must have them. I sincerely trust that when Parliament meets these things will be sifted to the bottom. Our noble service has become a political, a jobbing service, a profession in which men are pushed up more by trickery than honesty. In a conversation with Sir Edmund yesterday of long duration, he said, 'If I have the opportunity, I am determined to restore the service to its proper tone. I will write to those in power, and point out that if other steps are not taken to bring men forward the spirit of the service will be utterly sapped, destroyed, and the navy be no longer what it was.' I have often said that an Admiralty stool and an election committee-room, without practical experience, were bad stepping-stones for the position of commander-in-chief in these seas; it has been apparent since the departure of Sir William Parker, and now the nation will see the truth of it. North and south, the Baltic and the Mediterranean, have sent forth warning voices and loud demands for a change.

"I constantly wish I could venture to hint to my chief that a little prudence on this point is necessary; he openly now speaks to everybody on the subject, and many captains are awkwardly situated by it, disliking to hear too much against one who is still their commander-in-chief. He amazes me sometimes at his lack of prudence; in fact, he is an extraordinary character, as well as an extraordinary man. He owes his wonderful success in life entirely to himself, and he is somewhat spoiled by it; he possesses some of the highest qualities that adorn men, and retains some that are to be deplored. He is clear-headed, clever, quick to see the point of arrangement or operation, amiable to a degree, and courteous to all, as if it were not the effusion of a heart, but the effort of the mind to put himself forward. He told me by way of compliment, and has told me two or three times, that I am indebted to his applying for me, in the same way that a man in search of the best physician or lawyer seeks and chooses his man. He hates anything approaching to a toady or a tuft-hunter, yet he is always in admiration of people of the higher order, or aristocratic; Arundel this and Arundel that are a constant topic.

"*1st December, 6 a.m.*—To those disposed to be gloomy, this anchorage would not fail to increase it. We lie about a mile and a half from the enemy's shore, on whose strand are the wrecks of some of our fine transports; the weather is dark and gloomy, such as is the season's due, and it blows too fresh to communicate between the ships. We therefore deserve some little credit on board the 'Agamemnon' for preserving a Mark Tapley spirit of being cheery under these adverse circumstances, scarcely less than an honourable banishment. For my part, I so entirely include everything *pro* or *con* in the word duty, that I never for a moment find it irksome.

"My Lord Raglan has committed a most unpopular act; you recollect the circumstance probably of young Lord

Dunkellin, of the Guards, being taken prisoner by his own thorough stupidity and disregard of the warning of his sergeant. As soon as it reached the ears of Lord Raglan he announced his intention of sending in a flag of truce to make special enquiries about him, but Sir Edmund, being present, dissuaded him, saying, that though Lord Dunkellin, he was only a lieutenant, and unless he did it for others, he could not do it for him. Since that a noble fellow was taken in the battle of the Inkermann, defending his post to the last, until overpowered by numbers. No flag of truce was sent for *him*. Now an exchange has been arranged to take place between a captain of artillery (Russian) who is on board with us and my Lord Dunkellin, whilst the man who did his duty remains uncared for. This will not be good for my Lord Raglan, and I hope will be shown up. Such distinctions are vile on a battle-field. Sir Edmund, who bolsters up Lord Raglan a good deal, is very much put out at it. We have made ourselves quite snug for the winter cruise—all small sails unbent, all small rigging down, and very good heavy sails bent. I have fitted the yards in such a way that men on them in freezing weather can put their arms through loops (technically beackets) to give them a firm hold, which the fingers are frequently too cold to afford them. All these things do good. It is a fact that the splinter nets I put on 'Arethusa's' inner bulwarks were removed by the sapient Captain Symonds, and it so happened that his poor fellows suffered most on that very deck from bulwark splinters, and he will never forget it. When Sebastopol will fall it is impossible to say; heavy guns are getting up, mortars are being placed as well by the French as by ourselves, and they are pushing their sap well in, but of course difficulties increase as the season advances; however, I suppose ere very long a crushing fire will be poured in upon the place, which from its extent is so very difficult to get at. As far as the ships are concerned, I imagine there is no intention of laying

them again before stone walls. It is a satisfaction to us to see in Mentschikoff's report that our fort, Constantine, suffered considerable damage. Admiral Korniloff was killed in it."

"*December 2nd.*—The unfavourable weather still continues in all its force—wind, rain, with at times a good deal of swell setting in; but 160 fathoms of chain cable with a good heavy anchor at the end, in stiff clay and mud, make us feel at comparative ease. The weather does not afford us much topic for conversation, but causes us much anxiety about the troops, who suffer from the wet, not only in their tents, but the roads get so bad that the transport of provisions is difficult. The generals commanding-in-chief have been so utterly regardless of the future that no restraint was put upon the troops in their search for firewood; the consequence is that nearly all the buildings, cottages, and tenements have been destroyed for fuel. Some of the houses* were passable indeed, and would have afforded, with their outhouses, temporary hospitals and horse-sheds. Now nought but ruin and desolation stares you in the face from Balaklava to the camp. Even a portion of Balaklava has been pulled down, where it was wholly unnecessary. I occupied myself yesterday drawing up a routine for the fleet *as it is to be*, reading in *Household Words* how to make Cheshire cheese, and looking closely into the lower regions of the 'Agamemnon,' which in the important work of the last few months have fallen off. In fact, I never have an idle moment. I think life would be quite unbearable if I felt I was doing nothing. We are in full expectation that some of the screw fleet will be sent here immediately to take the place of the ships withdrawn. . . .

"*1 p.m.*—I have been scarcely a moment below since breakfast. The admiral has been on the poop and kept me in close conversation except a few minutes at luncheon. The 'Beagle' has come down with a few letters, little or no news.

* In the village of Balaklava.

"Lord Raglan writes that the 'Royal Albert' was to leave England on the 21st ult. with another battalion of the Guards. Much as I wish to see the Guards, I nevertheless begrudge them a passage in the future flagship, unless there be no other opportunity for them: it is so upsetting to a new ship; however, the feeling is as nothing compared with the necessity of their being here. I suppose Lord Raglan was told of this by the Duke of Newcastle. . . .

"I have as my coxswain the same fine young man I started with; he washes very well, and the *boy*, whose wits have been sharpened through fear of the broomstick, does the starching and ironing to perfection; I assure you he gets up my shirt-collars perfectly, so that I am quite in clover. Would that my soldier brethren were a tithe as well off, poor fellows. They might be better than they are, had more prudence and foresight been exercised by the heads. . . .

"I am in hopes the weather is subsiding. The moon shines brightly between fleecy clouds, the sea is going down, and the wind gradually lessens. Good-night. . . ."

"*December 3rd.*—In spite of the proofs of the subsiding elements yesterday, the wind has backed to its old quarter in the night and freshened again. It is very provoking, as we are unable to work at the wrecks to procure deck plank for the batteries and firewood for the troops. Our poor soldiers do not, as you fancy, underrate the enemy; the men meet them as Englishmen should. All the officers are gallant to a degree, but there are croakers and detractors enough among them to sap the spirit of any army in the world. Officers and men, with rare exceptions, are as helpless as children. I have often said so, and the character I gave them at the landing is now showing itself to the world—slow and gentlemanly, and fight like the devil—but apart from this they are mere babies as to foresight, and much suffering ensues. My Lord Raglan never goes among the men, he knows nothing of their wants or necessities; the consequence is that hundreds

get ill, and the labour of the remainder is increased. The French set us a bright example in all these points; at this moment they have made a small village into a little town, and brought police over from Marseilles to preserve order. Shops are open, and anything can be procured; whilst the English, who possess Balaklava and another nice village, have organized nothing. Confusion prevails to a frightful extent; spirit-shops are open without licence or restraint; prices are enormous. Oh for a master mind, a firm hand! . . .

"We have made the 'Agamemnon' quite ship-shape again, though she looks quite interesting with her arms and legs in slings and splints. The admiral seems day by day to draw nearer to me, and to place confidence in my professional opinion, and says pretty things to Cleeve; these things make my position a very happy one, and I can do double work in consequence. . . ."

"*December 4th, 6 a.m.*—My last was despatched yesterday, but the weather was so tempestuous and contrary to the steamer carrying the mail that we have misgivings about her reaching Constantinople in time to catch the packet for France. . . ."

"*December 5th, 6 a.m.*—In spite of the weather, we managed to get our letters out of the 'Valorous' sent with them last evening, and the *Times* up to the 18th November. . . .

"I wish I could read it (your letter) to some of the croakers here; I did read a portion of it to Whitmore, who is still on board, and uses, as heretofore, my cabin. For a young man he takes the darkest view of things imaginable; it annoys Sir Edmund very much; he said the other morning, 'I assure you I almost wish he would fall overboard. If anyone were to come and tell me he was drowned I should be delighted'—so angry does it

make him. He (Whitmore) feels thus strongly because he is on the staff of Sir George Brown, who has ever been a croaker, though a most gallant soldier; the instant the sound of guns and musketry reaches his ear he is in the saddle, cool and collected; understanding thoroughly well the duties of the field, and brave as a lion. He has been wounded frequently in this war; he received his last through the left arm whilst bringing up a French regiment of the line to a point he saw weak at Inkermann.

“I am sure I have never given you the correct version of the brilliant though disastrous light-cavalry charge at Balaklava. Poor Captain Nolan was a cavalry officer on the staff of the Quartermaster-General; he was a little wild in his notions at times. In common with many cavalry officers, he was greatly annoyed by the reflections and animadversions on the corps of his heart, and in a conversation a day or two preceding the battle he said to a friend, ‘Do you know how to get a C.B. easily?’ ‘No,’ was the reply. ‘Well, I’ll tell you; charge with the cavalry contrary to Lord Lucan’s orders.’ So that on the eventful day, after the charge of the heavy cavalry had been effected so brilliantly, he was sent with a message to order the *advance* of the light cavalry, *not the charge*, as the enemy were three-quarters of a mile distant; he rode up to my Lord Cardigan, who commanded, and said, ‘I am desired to tell you to charge, my lord.’ Poor Nolan was greatly excited, in fact, almost mad at the moment. Lord Cardigan replied, ‘Charge what?’ he being cool and collected, upon which Nolan rejoined, pointing with his sword in the direction of the enemy, ‘There are the enemy, sir; *I* will show you the way,’ dashing off himself, upon which Lord Cardigan’s blood rose, and he gave the order to advance at a gallop right into the field—through artillery, cavalry, everything—to recapture the guns taken by the enemy. Lord Cardigan’s horse being the best on the field, he was soon up with Nolan, to his

honour be it said, and rode beside him into the thick of it. Poor Nolan was soon mortally wounded in the stomach; his horse turned right round with him, and galloped with his dying rider to the rear; he, poor fellow, had lost the reins, his sword had fallen from his hands, his arms were extended upwards, and his wild shrieks, uttered in evident madness, rent the air, even piercing the din of guns and musketry. Lord Cardigan rode forward, followed by his noble fellows, falling fast, he himself not wounded but nearly unhorsed by the lance of a Cossack getting entangled in his trousers. Never was a more heroic or desperate action, reflecting immortal honour upon British arms. The subsequent sortie and the battle of the 5th you know ere this, both redounding to the infinite credit of our troops. As you say, their determination is not to be beaten. A stir has been made, I am happy to say, but why was it not made on the intelligence of the Alma reaching England? How many precious weeks have now passed, and winter has caught the men still under canvas in a very bleak and exposed position, where already there have been a few deaths from privation and cold. I read portions of your letter to Whitmore, who was a little bit astonished, and exclaimed, 'How well and beautifully she writes.'

"Sir Edmund did witness that cavalry charge, and many who did could scarcely restrain their impatience to be in the thick of it. The field immediately afterwards was too much for the admiral; he could not stand it. But the Inkermann has never been surpassed in any period of the world's history for the slaughter of the enemy and the space on which they fell in their attempt to force the English position. As I have told you, reinforcements have arrived, but they cannot stand the climate and hard work. The recruits die rapidly; eighty-four deaths *per diem* is the average in the whole army. Of the cavalry, sixty horses per regiment only remain (ten regiments); starvation and cold will destroy them all, and

they are now *talking* of preparing sheds to screen, I suppose, the carcasses, for little else will there be. The French, on the other hand, are hutted, with tolerable roads through their camp and many comforts. Canrobert is everywhere, my Lord Raglan nowhere; he is not even known except on the day of the fight, when he coolly goes into the thick of it, '*toujours calme*,' as Marshal St. Arnaud said of him in his despatch after the Alma.

"3 *p.m.*—The 'Hannibal' has anchored at Khersonese, and is employed landing the men she brought out. . . .

"We see that the 'Royal Albert' is to sail immediately, and to receive the flag as soon as she arrives. I cannot say I shall not regret leaving the 'Agamemnon,' because, as you say, she has gallant hearts on board her, and as a ship she is perfection. . . .

"We have got the promotions for the naval attack at last, and greatly disgusted Sir Edmund is at the selection made, which, of course, is the business of the commander-in-chief. It is certainly strange that no officer of the 'Sanspareil' should be promoted; she was the most hotly engaged next to us, and suffered great loss in killed and wounded; her first lieutenant was badly wounded also. . . ."

"*December 6th.*—The weather has at last changed; a light wind from the north-east has disclosed to our view hills covered with snow; it never, I fancy, comes very close down, but the cold blasts off them will nip our poor soldiers terribly on the tableland they occupy. . . ."

"*December 7th.*—As far as numbers go, the promotion has been a tolerable one for the day; those who have benefited by it may thank Sir Edmund for having a day at all. We have just sent off our Russian captain to the shore with a flag of truce; the 'Valorous' has taken him in. Yesterday, when least expected, out came the 'Vladimir,' followed by another steamer, ran along the shore of the French portion,

and while abreast of a creek in which the French steamers were snugly anchored opened fire, but at long range, throwing shot also in the direction of the harbour, where the French transports lay with some men-of-war. No steamer was on the look-out; 'Valorous' was loading with provisions for us; 'Terrible' was coaling. Both slipped as quickly as possible and tried to close with her without avail; two French steamers followed quickly, but she got safely back, having created a pleasant sensation among us of life, and risked nothing. I felt in a fever of excitement; I felt I would have given anything to be in command of a steamer near her, to have gone right at her, and grappled with her; but I fancy she would not have waited such a catastrophe. Strange how I love to see such a thing as that; there was a dash, a life in it that did us all good to witness. . . ."

"*December 8th, 6 a.m.*—A regular winter morning, with fog, caused by the keen north-east wind blowing over the warm water, which condenses the vapour; as soon as they equalize we shall have it very cold. For the last two days we have been able to communicate with our neighbours, which makes matters more sociable. . . ."

CHAPTER XVII

1854

“‘*Agamemnon*,’ off *Sebastopol*, *December 9th*.— . . . The reports from the camp are not cheering; the men have been overworked, the animals are dying off fast. Reinforcements pour in, but they are composed for the most part of very young, inexperienced men, who take ill immediately. Strange to say, the cholera has shown itself among them when it had quite disappeared from the old hands. This is difficult to account for. However, our party is a dreadfully croaking one; they seem to suck in, and delight in the misery such reports induce, as though to prove the truth of their prophesyings, even Whitmore—indeed, he is the greatest croak for a young man I ever beheld.

“8 *a.m.*—We have just finished an early breakfast, and I am in all the stiffness and misery of full-dress attire for a court-martial to try the lieutenant, second master, and crew of the ‘*Viper*’ for getting their vessel on shore twice in a short time. I scarcely know a more disagreeable duty, and to all appearance unpleasant weather is returning upon us. The Russians have decamped from before Balaklava after burning their huts, etc., but they are not to be, and *will* not be trusted. Colin Campbell is too canny to be caught napping, I fancy. . . .”

“*December 10th*, 6.30 *a.m.*—The removal of the wounded was a very different affair to that at the *Alma*: then the army was in the field on its march onward; here they came from their tents in detachments to Balaklava, to be embarked

in transports and steamers waiting for them, poor fellows. Boats lie at the pier, into which they are easily put; bad is the best, and they suffer much with a patience and heroism that never was surpassed. We see that Lord Raglan is made a field-marshal. His despatch is very fine; we have it in the *Times* of the 23rd, a most interesting paper. I am so very pleased you take it in: as ever, it is a history of the world at this time, well and carefully written, never better. Mr. Layard is gone home. The Admiralty tell Sir Edmund he is at liberty to change all or any of the officers he pleases in the 'Royal Albert.' . . .

"I don't know what Sir Edmund was thinking about, but soliloquising to-day over a biscuit and a glass of wine, he said, 'I have no opinion of a man who has not a high idea of women.'

"11th, 6 a.m.— . . . He has a *carte blanche* from the Admiralty to change every officer if he pleases. . . .

"Our difficulty will be to get good seamen, but I fully expect that men will readily volunteer, such is my vanity. Then I am sure they like the admiral beyond everything. I have only had to punish one man with the lash during the six months I have commanded her, and his offence was committed when absent from the ship a fortnight, owing, in part, to the slackness of the ship he was in."

"12th, 5.30 a.m.—Strong reinforcements arrive almost hourly from France in steamers of both countries. We shall soon have 100,000 men on the Khersonese forming the allied army. We came up to this anchorage, off Kamiesh, yesterday; I gave the old ship 'Vengeance' a tow up. Sir Edmund very generously and kindly admits me behind the scenes in all these operations and anxieties: we had a long quarter-deck walk last night after his guests had separated. The commander-in-chief has been informed that his request to be removed at the end of the year will be complied with,

and that Sir Edmund Lyons is to be his successor; yet you will scarcely believe that he neither seeks or receives proffered opinions or advice upon any one point from him. . . . Sir J. Graham writes to Sir Edmund exactly as though he were commander-in-chief, attaching, in fact, the full responsibility to him, whilst they deny or withhold from him the power of the position."

"13th December.—. . . Cleeve and myself landed for a stroll yesterday afternoon; after paying a visit to Lyons of the 'Miranda,' we walked out to the Khersonese lighthouse, a well-constructed, fine building, now occupied by some marine artillerymen from the 'Tribune.' The Russians made a sortie the night before last upon one of our entrenchments, found the 50th Regiment stationed to hold them fast asleep; they jumped up on the parapet, gave a savage yell, rushed in and wounded a few of our men in their blankets; it happened to be the hour of relief, when the Rifles were advancing; they fixed bayonets, rushed at them, fired, killed a great many, and drove them back. Earlier in the night a successful attempt was made by them upon a small mortar battery close to the walls, belonging to the French; they carried off the little mortars with them, for which purpose they brought ropes. All this is bad, shows want of discipline."

"December 19th.—The mail, now due three days, has been put on board the 'Wrangler' by that clever man Admiral Boxer, and she has been given a vessel as large as herself to tow up, if you can imagine anything so clever. At least 50,000 people are kept in a state of suspense and misery for the sake of a few tons of coals, when the nation is straining every nerve to lessen the discomfort and anxieties of the fine fellows who are engaged in this expedition.

* * * * *

"The 'Royal Albert' arrived last evening; as she passed close under our stern we gave her three times three cheers.

It was just dusk, almost too dark to form a correct opinion of her, but she looked a noble ship. Admiral Dundas, I hear, intends to quit immediately, Lord Raglan having intimated to him that no operations would be undertaken immediately. 'Trafalgar,' 'Bellerophon,' 'Britannia,' and 'Arethusa' are to form his bodyguard to the shores of Old England.

Tell Fred when you write to him that his nephew is a fine little fellow, sharp as a needle; the admiral scarcely moves without him. It is truly amusing to see how cleverly he soothes the admiral's impatience; you would suppose the admiral were going to swallow him at times; the boy stands before him with such a face of nervous determination, with a pretence of fright that is truly ridiculous; the moment the storm has passed he is as if nothing in the world had happened.

"Captains Grey and Talbot dined here last evening. I heard Grey put the question to the admiral about the captain of the fleet, certainly showing that he knew nothing of the offer likely to be made to him by Sir J. Graham. It gave Sir Edmund an opportunity, of which he took full advantage, to point out how undesirable it was and wholly unsuited to his views, as well as opposed to his wishes, and I fancy Grey quite agreed with him.

"*December 20th.*—We are very agreeably surprised to find our new ship well manned as far as they go, and that she is only 200 short, which I do not anticipate any difficulty in collecting here, inasmuch as Sir Edmund has permission to transfer men from the 'Leander,' or any other sailing ship. Little dined with us last evening, but I so pumped him, poor fellow, that I fear I made his meal very official. He is a good officer, and a thorough gentleman; the character given of him is the highest. She is to land her men this morning—I mean the troops, who are all in high feather and good condition; after that she will require a great deal doing to her to prepare her for the flag. What is considered my cabin at this moment

is the only really comfortable part of the ship, Sir T. Pasley having occupied it. I have not yet been on board, nor do I wish to go until she is more fitted to be seen. Sir Edmund said to Cleeve the night before last, 'Well, I ought to be the happiest man going; I am to command this fleet, with my flag in one of the finest ships in the world.* Then I have such a flag-captain, such a secretary, and such a flag-lieutenant, that everything must go well.' This is very delightful, and though said as a pleasantry, is quite meant. I wonder if the work will be worse done for such a kindly expression of feeling? I think not. Admiral Dundas has informed Sir Edmund that he intends to quit *this part* of the station to-day; but imagine how he does it; he retains Sir Edmund's commission as commander-in-chief, and holds to the pay and patronage himself, whilst he retires to the Bosphorus to eat a Christmas dinner with Lady Emily. He has not put a single instruction into his hands, but merely says, 'There are the ships, I leave you in charge of them.'"

"*December 21st.*—The commander-in-chief took his departure yesterday afternoon in the 'Furious.' When he weighed he stood out to the ships with the signal flying, 'Success to you all.' The 'Rodney' and 'Vengeance' gave him a cheer, which was taken up by 'Hannibal,' 'Algiers,' and ourselves. Sir Edmund, at Cleeve's suggestion, replied, 'Happiness attend you,' but in making the signal a very ludicrous mistake occurred—substituting one flag for another, we hoisted 'Hanging attends you'†—it was absolutely flying for a minute before it was discovered; luckily it was not answered. The flags had the same colours in them, and being rolled up, were not distinguished, nor did we know the signification until we looked afterwards. Sir Edmund tried to be angry, but being on the poop himself saw the innocence of it, and went off, with everybody, into fits of laughter. He had just

* The "Royal Albert" was a three-decked, screw, line-of-battle ship.

† See Appendix XIII.

been talking to me, and said, 'I wish him happiness, certainly ; he has left no instructions of any sort.'

"A very sharp fire was kept up from three to five this morning. It was quite pretty to look at, and as we know these night affairs seldom occur with any serious loss, one looks at it as at a tableau."

"22nd December.—Your letters ask many pertinent questions on the state of affairs here, which are certainly by no means cheering. The mismanagement, both at home and abroad, is something humiliating to behold in responsible men.

"Sir Edmund has never had the control of the transport service except to conduct the great expedition here ; even then he was almost compelled to assume it, for the success of so great an undertaking. Admiral Dundas is the man, the head of all ; under him, and applied for by him, are some officers of high rank quite unfitted for the arduous and important duty of conducting so superb a service. On one of these rests the responsibility for the serious losses sustained during that severe gale. I myself said to Sir Edmund, as we were quitting the anchorage of Balaklava in consequence of the threatening appearance of the weather, 'Would it not be well, sir, to signalize to Captain —— the approach of bad weather, and the necessity for sending the transports to sea ?' The admiral's reply was, 'I cannot do it, it is entirely his own affair and the commander-in-chief's.'

"I have always thought Sir Edmund wrong in this, *entre nous* ; he ought to have risked censure for interference to save life and property. It is not after the thing has taken place that I say this ; I suggested two months ago the propriety of sending all the transports to Sinope that could not be stowed in Balaklava and this little bay here, keeping up a constant communication with them, and as fast as vessels quitted Balaklava for supplies sending for the full ones to

Sinope. But I have often said to you, and I repeat now, that no practical foresight has been shown by the British in any one branch of this great undertaking. We are under a government that does not understand the meaning of the word system; we lavish blood and treasure like water. At this moment, when England is pouring forth everything in abundance that man's ingenuity and Christian sympathy can suggest, no means are adopted to ensure their reaching their destination. The transport for the army has been so reduced in cattle that the greatest difficulty arises in supplying the men with their daily rations; how then are they ever to get up from Balaklava to the camp the enormous supplies sent them from England? The troops frequently eat their meat raw from want of firewood to cook it, and lately four pounds of meat only have been issued to fifteen men—men who only get one night in five free from guards or trenches. So many of the transport animals have died that the troops have been compelled to walk six miles and back for their rations, over the most difficult roads. At the suggestion of Sir Edmund Lyons the cavalry horses were ordered by Lord Raglan to assist in bringing up provisions; and how do you think it was done? One hundred and twenty troopers rode, each trooper led one horse, upon which horse was put *one* bag of biscuit weighing 90 lbs.; thus 240 horses were employed to carry 120 bags of bread because the etiquette of the cavalry did not admit of more than one horse being led by one man, or that the weight carried should be otherwise placed than as a man would sit, so they did not carry two bags, one on either side, as they might have done. Another example: the commissariat, instead of opening the salt meat casks and getting rid of the weight of salt, pickle, and the cask itself, have thought it right to send them up entire; thus one cask only could go with difficulty, where the same conveyance could have taken the contents of three in bags, of which there are plenty. Another little anecdote: after the

unfortunate wrecks at Balaklava the surface of the waters was for days covered with driftwood of all sizes, from a chip to a mast, so covered that we could with difficulty pull the boats through it. The quartermaster-general gave an order that none was to be taken for firewood, lest the men might take large pieces that could be applied to hutting purposes. Many a poor soldier, who had at infinite labour collected a bundle to cook his meal with, was stopped by a sentry at the entrance to the village and compelled to deposit it at the guard tent, where, as a matter of course, the guard itself burned it.

"Whilst this order was in force I actually saw the French soldiers taking wood from the very same source and allowed to pass, out of courtesy to our less scrupulous allies. My heart almost burst with indignation; I could scarcely restrain myself when I met the stupid old commandant, to whom I rode at once, and besought him to modify or rescind so cruel an order in favour of enduring, gallant, starving men.

"Again, after all that has been said of the arrangements for the wounded, so ill-conducted is the system of transport at Constantinople that at this moment of my writing they have not got a covered litter to carry mangled bodies from the place of landing to the hospital, a distance of a mile and a half. Every poor soldier who can manage to crawl is compelled to walk that distance, occasionally supported by Turkish recruits, who all the time hate the task. One poor sufferer so placed the other day was left by himself in consequence of a squall of rain coming on; his two Mussulman aids ran off; he dropped, and his *dead body* was found the following morning where they had left him.

"Poor Major Maitland, who was dangerously wounded in the left chest and lung, was literally left in the gateway near the hospital for nine hours, though a comfortable quarter awaited him in the hospital; the consequence was that inflammation ensued, and he may now die. Now, are not

these facts sufficient to justify what I have said, and acquit me of being a needless croaker? God forbid that I should heedlessly or needlessly disparage officers who have difficulties to surmount certainly, but they have not been such as to be insurmountable; nay, I should have thought that experience alone would have given foresight, and foresight would have lessened the difficulties by two-thirds.

“During the gale the water was literally blown up in drift out of the little harbour of Balaklava, and the ships at anchor there were blown against the sides of the harbour, ‘Sanspareil’ among the number; but little harm was sustained by any beyond a little uncouth rubbing from such close contact. As to ‘Agamemnon,’ had she touched the rugged shore of Khersonese, off which she was anchored, she would not have lived to add more honour to her name, which I trust she may yet do. We rode it out well; I had no undue anxiety, not more than I ever have in a gale on the sea, which so completely convinces man of his insignificance and nothingness as he goes up and down between the seas, that the majesty of God is so apparent as to enforce solemn awe upon the stoutest heart; and yet I am never riding through a gale that I do not feel how much man has to be thankful for, in that he has been permitted to possess talent, skill, and wisdom, though not to subdue the elements, at least to modify their severity, mould and turn them to his advantage and benefit. It is at this moment blowing very strong, with a very considerable sea, right into the enemy’s port, off which we are lying; we have 170 fathoms of chain cable out on one anchor, and ride very easily. The glass rises, so that I hope it will not prevent communication with the vessel that is to take the mail to-morrow. We are tumbling and tossing about so that I must leave you to take a look on deck. I do not like the look of the weather at all, but trust much to good anchor and cable, good screw and steam, to help her through very much bad weather.”

"December 23rd, 7 a.m.—I was up so much in the wind yesterday, and once or twice during the night, that I am late this morning in coming to you. Whilst I was writing to you yesterday the jolly-boat, hoisted up on a level with my window (the wardroom tier of windows), was washed away from her tackles; this will give you an idea of the sea that quickly tumbles in here. It is now fine, but I do not think the weather by any means settled. The fate of the poor 'Prince,' to which you naturally allude, was a very melancholy one. The statement in the *Times* respecting his anchors is quite correct, therefore with only one left in a wild, open, deep-water anchorage on an iron-bound coast when the wind began at south-east, as it did, to blow hard in squalls on the Sunday morning, with a very threatening appearance and a falling barometer, a prudent seaman should have put to sea, regarding all orders as secondary to the safety of his ship. He saw us quit the bay, followed by two or three more, though doubtless those who remained strengthened him in his opinion to do so, forgetting that they all had their full complement of anchors and cables. At last, when the hurricane set in in all its violence, he began to drive among some of the ships; cutting away his masts caused his destruction, poor fellow; the rigging wound itself up in the screw and disabled it. If he had slipped, put his head at it, *shut his eyes*, and trusted to providence, in all human probability he might have saved his ship. However, a court of enquiry is ordered upon the sad catastrophe, in which I may take part, therefore I will abstain from reflecting on the conduct of those whose duty it was to see to her safety. I see by the papers that the navvies are actually on their way; had they been here two months ago, how different would have been the state of things now. Everything comes late, and not until many a poor fellow has gone to his last home from disease brought on from privation and over-

work. The French beat us out of the field in foresight and management, whilst our fellows always have to bear the brunt in the day of battle. God knows where it will end. Our *heads* seem so incompetent, so utterly unpractical. In the sortie the other night, when that great firing took place, the Russians attacked two positions of our trenches—on one they advanced with yells and hideous noises, on the other silently. The ruse succeeded. Our men were surprised by the silent party—11 were killed, 20 wounded, including the major, mortally, and 3 officers were taken prisoners.

“I believe a court-martial is to take place.

“I think I told you the other day of a similar success on the French, where they succeeded in carrying off three little brass mortars and one officer, whom they found rolled up in his blanket fast asleep. Canrobert sent the regiment to the rear, under a cloud, and ordered a court-martial upon the general of division. The officer being carried off in his blanket caused great fun. The weather, though fine, is still unsettled and disagreeable. The ‘Dauntless’ has arrived with 300 Artillery, parcels, stores, etc. The ‘Royal Albert’s’ rudder received damage during the gale yesterday, and must be unshipped; it is defective timber and badly or weakly constructed.”

“*December 24th.*—We have had a disagreeable night of it—squalls, sea, and rain have filled one with anxiety for the ‘Royal Albert.’ I surveyed her rudder with a master and three carpenters yesterday and found it broken in two parts. She is, of course, a helpless log upon the waters while she is so situated, and the weather does not admit of her being moved even into the French harbour or bay. Sir Edmund, who never takes the gloomy side of anything, sees great good luck in the mishap, if no further evil comes of it, as it might have gone when the ship was much more dangerously situated and caused her loss. This is quite true,

but while she is without it I shall not be happy. We had a long conversation yesterday on the position of the ships here during the winter, and came to the conclusion that it would be better to get the good ship 'Royal Albert' into the bay where the French three-decker is lying, secure her as well as we can there, strike all masts, and make snug for the winter. In the event of this being done, of which I feel pretty certain, the screw two-decked ships will be ordered to slip on the approach of bad weather and keep the sea until it moderates."

"*Christmas Day.*—It is as fine a day as yesterday was gloomy and disagreeable. The wind has come from N.E., fresh and cold, with a rising barometer, revealing to us a splendid outline of snow-covered hills and mountains at the back of Sebastopol. Though cold, it is dry, fresh, bracing, and seems to bring health in every bit of it. 'Royal Albert' has got her rudder in, and in a week or so we hope to have her set right. After six weeks of incessant bad weather we have reason to expect some fine; people say we shall have two more months of clear cold; if it be but dry, well and good.

"Three thousand fresh troops are in the Bosphorus, and five thousand French: this will be a noble reinforcement. The vessels with huts are also there, and will come on immediately. Hurrah! Our fellows only want a roof to shelter them, and their regular rations, to carry on their work as men; but hard work, no rest, and little food are bad helps to courage.

"*December 27th, 7 a.m.*—Our brilliant eastern sky, with fresh bracing weather, has again given place to clouds, and the old south-west wind, but not as yet in any force. The 'Bellerophon' is here on her way to England, and may probably sail this evening. Lord George dined here last evening; Lord Edward came to meet him; the night was

fine, so we had an agreeable evening. Lord Edward is ordered to remain for a time, I am happy to say.* He seems so pleased at my success, and is so friendly and kind, that it quite gratifies me.

“Oh for a week of such weather as yesterday and the day before, and our fellows will be quite set up. We muster now the same force of British as landed in the Crimea, and the French have more than trebled theirs; so that of all arms they count some 120,000 men. As soon as the batteries have opened and made an entrance, as well as destroyed the town, I fancy we shall go to complete the work. All are very anxious for the assault. Jurien† told me yesterday that deserters informed them they fully expected the place to fall, that they had no hope of it, in fact, but they were bent on resistance to the last. All credit is due to them; they have defended the place nobly.”

“*December 28th, 7 a.m.*—We have had three very beautiful days, fresh and cold but dry and clear, with not too much wind to communicate with our neighbours.

“I am full of plans and making arrangements for our new ship; I have been closeted half an hour with the admiral on the subject, but he always ends by saying, ‘Well, do it exactly as you like, do as you like about it,’ which is not disagreeable. Our first object, root and branch, is the spirit of the public service, that we be what we are thought to be as a navy, and not a mere phantom of bygone glories; then to bring about by every means in our power good discipline, with cordiality and unanimity in all ranks.

“Sir Edmund’s manner towards subordinate officers is perfect; he makes them all like him, and yet we have no hypocritical *bonhomie* with affected friendship in one hand, and worse than indifference in the other. Anything like

* His former captain, Lord Edward Russell, still commanding “Vengeance.”

† The French admiral, Jurien de la Graviere.

gallantry never escapes him ; he sets his eye upon the man of energy and dash at once and will push him on. Young Mr. Ball, who commanded the steam tender the 'Circassia,' was given the option by him thus, 'There's your coffin or master's rank if you lead in the "Agamemnon," sounding ahead of her and take us close.' He accepted it instantly, and dashed ahead in a fire that you would have fancied enough to annihilate him. The only lead-line he had was cut in two by a shot in the leadsman's hands ; out he went to a small steamer in search of another ; when he got it, back he came to his post in the thick of it. Sir Edmund befriended him, kept his word, and he was made a master immediately. He is the son of a carpenter who served with my father, is a spirited, frank fellow, and subsequently read his old father's letters here to me of unaffected joy and surprise, he and the old woman his wife scarcely believing their senses, and begging he would write home again to say if it were really true. He was also to be sure to thank the admiral and Captain Mends for helping him. How different to our late chief, who could do nothing that was not a job of some sort or other ; as to the general good of the public service, unless he could screw a job out of it, an officer might wear out energy, brain, and health unrewarded, always having intense jealousy shown him if he got ahead without his assistance. But I must not be uncharitable, he is old ; the Government should bear the blame of such an appointment. We must work hard and try to do better. Admiral Berkeley has written to Sir Edmund to say that he concludes he will not have a captain of the fleet, and I begin to hope he may not have."

"*December 29th, 7 a.m.*—I have been up long, but the admiral has kept me in conversation for an hour ; therefore don't suppose I am giving up good resolutions.

"The 'Bellerophon' is off now ; I have just received a farewell note from Lord George.

"Coles, the late flag-lieutenant, will send you a drawing of 'Arethusa' as she figured before Odessa; a circumstance which, I verily believe in my heart of hearts, decided Sir Edmund, if he had had a doubt before, to give me the option of being his captain. I felt, as I have told you before, that it was a well-done thing, a *tableau*, as the French call it. If it merit a frame give it one, and write under it, 'The Maiden Shot.' I was on board the 'Royal Albert' yesterday a good deal, drawing out cabins and making other arrangements, as well as superintending the rudder. I have given Sir Edmund a plan for improving it, lessening its weight a trifle and diminishing the leverage, which acts so injuriously to the neck, considerably. He quite agreed with me, and it is in progress."

"*December 30th, 6 a.m.*—The mail arrived yesterday, bringing us the *Times* to the 15th, with the opening and first sittings of Parliament. You will be gratified, my wife, as I am, at the honourable mention by Mr. Layard of the author of the arrangements of the great armada, one of the greatest and most costly the world has ever seen.* I feel very proud of this honourable mention, and I feel equally proud and happy at the way it was announced to me by Sir Edmund as I entered the cabin, after a short absence from the ship. He said, 'Well, Mends,' then he read the extract from the speech with as much interest and delight as I listened, winding up by saying, 'I made him

* Mr. Layard, speaking in the House of Commons, is thus reported in the *Times* of December 13th, 1854 :—

"Undoubtedly the armada was one of the most magnificent, we might say the most magnificent, that ever went from any port, and they had heard the arrangements and disposition of the fleet attributed to Lord Raglan; but he was sure the noble lord himself would be the last to take credit for these arrangements, which were made by Captain Mends, of the 'Agamemnon' (hear, hear). The right hon. gentleman, speaking of the tents, states that if Lord Raglan had taken the tents with the expedition he must have left behind battalions, and that he took these battalions rather than the tents. Now the truth was that the tents were there, and landed, but there were no means of transporting them (hear, hear)."

promise me to do it.' It was a nice way of giving publicity to the fact after the slight of the noble commander-in-chief, who never even acknowledged it; *that* I would have forgiven him, if he had but permitted it to be carried out as it merited, and as the country called for the carrying out of such an undertaking.

"I had a long gossip with Jurien on board the 'Montebello' yesterday. He is an agreeable, frank fellow; we shall get on very well, I am sure. You ask many pertinent questions on the subject of the hurricane of November 14th. It was a distinct cyclone, or revolving gale, as it was proved to be as satisfactorily as ever any could be, by the logs of the ships in different parts of the Black Sea. All the merchant ships might and ought to have gone to sea on their own responsibility as seamen. I think we ought all to have been at sea. Spratt* always has said, "If the wind sets in at south-east with a falling barometer, when it gets down to 29.62 go to sea; it is sure to veer round.' He signalized that morning to us, before we quitted Balaklava, 'The barometer indicates a gale.' I asked Sir Edmund if he would not give Captain Christie a hint by signal about the safety of his ships. He declined doing so, when I would have done it at any cost. Do not mention this; I take no credit for superior wisdom in the matter; it was the common prudence of a sailor who desired to quit an unprotected, dangerous anchorage in a south-west gale. I am sure he has regretted he did not adopt my suggestion. I am very glad to hear the country crying out; it is high time. I think this war will open the eyes of people to the ill effects of jobbing offices.

"We have authentic accounts by deserters from Sebastopol of their strength within the walls. The Russians have got into their heads that the weather entirely impedes operations, and that we are halting for the spring. They have 15,000 men within; the remainder of the great army is dispersed

* Captain Spratt, of the "Spitfire."

between Simferopol, Bagtcheserai, and the other places, to be fed, as the roads prevent provisions coming to them. This may be a ruse, but I think it true. Everything you can conceive in the shape of comfort is pouring in for the troops, men as well as officers; transport for it is what is wanted. It is far easier to convey them from London to Balaklava than from that to the camp; no amount of money can procure it. Do not be over anxious about me. I assure you I rejoice to be in such a field of duty; the greater the responsibility and the greater the labour, the more credit to be gained; and if I weather it, what happiness I shall ever derive in the reflection that I have done my duty, and sure am I to reap the reward in being able to provide for my dear girls, if it please God to spare us all to each other. I feel at this moment an indescribable pleasure at being one thanked by Parliament for his exertions in such a cause. I have even experienced before a trifle of regret that I was not one to merit it when it has been bestowed, but how immeasurably higher is the good aimed at now, our efforts to gain which are considered worthy of a nation's thanks; so little do we see before us. I would not exchange my position now for that of any officer in our service, so wonderfully and graciously have my steps been conducted. . . ."

"*December 31st.*—I have given up all thoughts of the Baltic, though you little know how nearly it was decided upon. Sir Edmund himself did not look forward to it with any degree of pleasure, as he has so entirely mixed himself up with everything in this part of the world, and identified himself so completely with the expedition. I hear the Sultan intends to bestow his high order on all the captains, and I suppose hereafter a medal will be given for the Crimea and Black Sea services. I am thankful to see those noble fellows on shore getting rewarded at last, how short soever it may fall of what is their due. A nation's

gratitude expressed through its Parliament is a great thing, and will put gladness into the hearts of all who have fought so nobly and bled so profusely in her cause. Nothing can exceed the liberality of individuals at home; shiploads arrive of warm clothing and comforts of every description, but the difficulty is the transport for them to the camp. I am going to propose to the admiral to land fifty men from each ship as a fatigue party, unpack the cases, and carry up in bundles the contents; I am sure we could do good. I will propose it at any rate, and volunteer to conduct it.

“The snow is very low down this morning, covering the camping-ground of both armies; if it would but freeze it would be well, but I fear it is soft, melting snow, which will render the tracks and roads almost impassable. However, that is the dark side of the picture. Roads are in progress in both camps; the French are working hard; the roads to them are more numerous. They are also helping to carry up shot, powder, etc. . . .”

CHAPTER XVIII

1855

"*January 1st.*—We have ushered in the year here with nearly a gale from the south-west, sleet and light rain, cold and unpleasant-looking.

"A nephew of Sir Edmund's, who belongs to the staff of Sir G. Brown, is now temporarily attached to his uncle for the purpose of communicating with Lord Raglan; he is a good, honest fellow, his name is Pearson; he belongs to the 7th Regiment, and at the Alma, seeing the officer carrying the colours of his regiment overpowered, he quitted Sir G. Brown's side, dashed into the thick of the *mêlée*, seized the colours, and bore them to the head of his regiment in safety. He is a pleasant companion at breakfast and dinner, adding agreeably to the general party. He went up to the camp yesterday, and brings back word that the men and officers have for the most part got their warm clothing, and that there seemed no scarcity of food; he saw fresh meat hanging to the tent-poles; some of his brother officers gave him a capital luncheon on ham, bologna, bread, butter, champagne, and curaçoa. This sounds very fine, but they are generous-hearted fellows, and the moment they get a little stock of such luxuries, for which they pay very highly, they are so elated that they make a general onset and invite all passers-by. I hear most things can now be procured at Balaklava, but at high prices; for a moderate loaf two shillings, for a fair little sheep thirty shillings, for a fowl five shillings, for a turkey ten shillings. The officers for the most part receive preserved meats,

soups, and all kinds of things from their friends, so that I hope their privations will not be great now. As yet they do not complain of the cold, but the tent offers but a slight barrier against the bleak north-east wind. The hutting materials are arriving, but the great difficulty now consists in getting them up to the camp. General Canrobert is getting very anxious to begin a decided attack with the whole force; he has his batteries ready, whilst ours are not nearly so, I am sorry to say. Depend upon it, it will come to light that Lord Raglan is not a man of energy. I see now by Sir Edmund's manner that his heart is racked at the lamentable want of energy from first to last in the army. Lord Raglan takes everything for granted; ever believes the last tale; never brings anybody to book, and he is surrounded by inefficient men.

"Do not quote me for any of this; facts will speak for themselves. The Press is the only organ that keeps them going at all; in this war I am of opinion that it has done infinitely more good than harm. . . .

"The admiral has received his baton as commander-in-chief this day. I think on the receipt of this you may almost direct to the 'Royal Albert,' as I hope she will be ready in a month. A division of French and English troops made a reconnaissance in force from Balaklava on Saturday and came upon the Russian division upon the plain: they made a rapid retreat, setting fire to their huts and entire encampment. It did good so far, that we had a good look at the back of the hills, where a large force was supposed to be, and drove off the Cossacks, who were for ever hovering on the heights, leading us to suppose that they were in force; moreover, it convinces them that we are alive."

"*January 2nd, 7 a.m.*—It has been a bad night, low, very low, and still lowering barometer; blowing a fresh gale at S.W. by W.; just sufficiently open off the point of Khersonese to afford us no shelter, and a heavy sea setting in. I have

not taken my clothes off except to take my bath this morning, which so refreshes me that I scarce feel as if I had not been in bed. . . .

"The wind since 5 a.m. has come a little more from the land, with much rain, which together will bring us smoother water, otherwise we tumble about exactly as though we were in a gale in mid-ocean. Yesterday, however, was favourable to the troops, but rain gives them much trouble."

"*Off Sebastopol, January 3rd, 1855.*—The admiral has been reading his private letters to me, and has given me some public ones to digest and give an opinion on them. He received his commission as commander-in-chief, and all the important documents connected with this vast command, in a set of boxes resembling candle cases or old chart boxes, addressed (on paper pasted on) to Rear-Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, leaving out his new title. Not a word of leave-taking or anything in the shape of courtesy or civility has come to Sir Edmund. I hear from Sir Edmund that the debate on the vote was anything but agreeable, but that to save the late commander-in-chief justice was not done to those who deserved it. I hear Mr. Layard was provoked to say things which he had the means of proving, and that put poor Admiral Dundas in a very poor place indeed. Government is to blame; the Admiralty incurred a very serious responsibility in not recalling him before they did. *Entre nous*, they write full of hope now that he is gone. I am going to write to Mr. Layard to express my grateful acknowledgment of the handsome manner in which he alluded to me as the author of the arrangements for the movements and landing of the expedition. That is better than newspaper eulogium."

"*January 4th, 7 a.m.*—A north-west gale, which is still blowing, accompanied with squalls of snow, sleet, and hail, and a heavy sea, have kept me up since two o'clock. The dear old screw is slowly working away to ease our cable,

and affords us much comfort. Then our good friend the barometer shows signs of better things; but this is a wild anchorage, to say the least of it, and gives us much anxiety. 'Royal Albert' is tossing about very much, still a helpless log without her rudder, which is nearly complete on her decks, but it is difficult to say when we may calculate upon a day for shipping it; it can only be done in a calm. There is no help for it; a harbour for her we have not got. We have not had any settled weather since November 10th, and there is little doubt, from the extremely low barometer the day before yesterday, that we were on the verge of a receding gale or hurricane.

"1 *p.m.*—The 'Arrow' has arrived with the mails, etc. I thought that I explained to you how it was that I was never mentioned publicly as the author of the arrangements of the expedition. Sir Edmund, never contemplating the idea of the commander-in-chief's appropriating them to himself, ordered me to fix my name to them as acting under his order, which was after the plan adopted in Egypt. He accordingly took the first copy on board the 'Furious,' to Admiral Dundas, and said to him, in my presence, '*Mends has done it all*; I have not had anything to say to it, beyond entrusting him with the charge.' The gallant admiral, who hated the expedition from the very first, and all who advocated it, seized upon the papers and issued them as his own; therefore to him am I indebted for the omission. Sir Edmund cannot write despatches except through the commander-in-chief, and in the case of the 'Arethusa,' *he* purposely omitted to name the ship. Nothing could be said or written now unless it strikes my Lord Raglan to do so, when he sees Mr. Layard's speech. I am myself quite satisfied with what Mr. Layard has said, as, after all, I only fitted a link into the chain of operations, though doubtless an important one, as the chain would not have been connected at all but for it. Your desire to have all due honour

done to your husband is natural, and no one has felt it more keenly than Sir Edmund, but he has been powerless.

"I am wholly indebted to Admiral Dundas for such silence, and, as matters are, I am not sure that I am not by consequence the more fortunate man. I sincerely trust the whole thing will be sifted; justice to the sufferers demands it. I shall think very ill of a House of Commons that cannot unravel it. See what they have done now, and think themselves clever for doing it. They have appointed Admirals — and —: the first disliked by the army from first to last, hated and despised by the whole mercantile marine as an uncouth, uneducated, foul-mouthed old admiral, known by us all to be utterly unsuited to the task, but yet thought by our brilliant board to be admirably suited for it; the other a natural fool put into one of the most important trusts at this moment under the Crown, where head, method, knowledge of the service, and great ability are essential to its being properly conducted. It seems almost as though it were intended that at this moment we should be miserably governed and mismanaged. I could weep over it at times to see such talent, energy, and zeal, in all the subordinate branches, so ill-employed at a moment when the country loudly calls for the best. Omar Pasha has just arrived, to communicate with French and English generals and admirals.

"The weather is getting somewhat finer, though it is very difficult to communicate by boat even yet. . . .

"My recent letters will have informed you of the accommodation I am likely to have in the 'Royal Albert' as now fitted and without a captain of the fleet. My cabin is in itself perfect; it is all after-cabin, running the whole way across the stern, with one good sleeping and dressing-cabin, and a quarter-gallery on one side. The other quarter-gallery is partitioned off it altogether for the secretary. I have a beautiful stern-gallery across the whole breadth of the stern,

extending round the quarters to enable me to see the sails without going upon deck. I have no fore-cabin, no flagships have, all that part being divided into cabins, offices, etc., etc., and if I had it would be the worst place in the world for youngsters in a flagship, so frequent are the interruptions. I think my plan, of the gun-room, the best, when the naval instructor is good. . . .

"Snow has been falling all day; the boys have been making much of it on deck, snowballing, the mids on the quarter-deck, the boys on the forecastle, amidst much jollity. It is now half-past nine, and I left a party at it just now by moonlight. I fear the poor fellows in the camp have something else to think of; they will have hard work to get up their supplies, I fancy.

"Correct as the newspaper, I mean the *Times*, is in the main, you must not swallow all he gives. Dannenberg's division did not come by sea, but made a forced march, completing on one day as many as forty-two miles. He has been superseded from Odessa for a mistake he is said to have made on the 5th. General Liprandi has also been removed for an alleged mistake; but the fact is, their only fault was having the temerity to attack the line of red. Independent of the want of management at Balaklava and elsewhere, great difficulties have to be overcome; a very great one as concerns Balaklava is the extreme smallness of the harbour, with a narrow, tortuous entrance, and the very great size of the ships and steamers that have to enter it, vessels longer than the 'Agamemnon,' and of immense tonnage.

"Then Lord Raglan, in a moment of ill-judged haste, decided to give up Balaklava as a base, and without consulting Sir Edmund sent down an order to clear the harbour of all the shipping. The moment Sir Edmund heard it he flew to the rescue and saved the army, for had we given it up we could not have kept up the supplies.* That is the chief reason

* See footnote on page 176.

for so many vessels being outside when that terrible gale came on ; but being out, the masters should have consulted their own safety and gone to sea without a doubt ; but seeing the 'Retribution,' 'Niger,' 'Vesuvius,' and 'Vulcan' holding on, they thought they could do likewise, I suppose. Nothing exculpates a captain, in my opinion, nor is it possible to acquit the unfortunate master of the 'Prince' of blame ; he might and ought to have been at sea.

"I am so pleased that you are on a sociable footing with Mrs. Cleeve and her mother. I like him so very much ; he is quite an anti-red-tape secretary."

"*January 5th, 9 a.m.*—A very lovely day—hard frost, clear sky, and fresh east-north-east wind, with a high barometer, the land covered with snow to the water's edge. A most agreeable change from south-west, with heavy clouds and rain. The ship is so steady, too, that we hardly know ourselves. I entered pretty freely into affairs last night, to show you in how many parts of the public service mismanagement has prevailed. But for Sir Edmund, not a step would have been taken in any direction from first to last. He has been the genius of the campaign, of the expedition. Imagine his calling upon Lord Raglan the other day to ask him to show himself more amongst the troops ; to address them, and get acquainted in his own person with their wants, as a great many disbelieved in his presence, and the majority of his army had never seen him. He talked to him in such a way that tears actually came into his eyes. He thanked Sir Edmund very much, and promised him he would attend to his wishes ; and I hope he has, as positive discontent was beginning to show itself. I am so thankful that you were not talked into allowing my letters or any portion of them to be published ; I would not have had it done for anything. Sir Edmund's hands are now so very full that I have only time for talking to him a little very early in the morning, and then only on service topics.

"He said yesterday, 'Well, we have managed to get the thanks of Parliament in the Black Sea, and several promotions.' Oh, if he had but commanded us during the first six months, what a very different state of things there would have been. . . .

"I hear that the navvies have arrived, and undertake to have their road complete in a month.* What a boon it will be; it will save the lives of hundreds. At this moment the army has scarcely any means of transport. Each division had 250 baggage ponies attached, and now only 11 remain to each. Sad neglect. Heaps of things lie at Balaklava, but there are no means of transport for them. Sir Edmund rode up to headquarters yesterday through the snow, fourteen miles going and coming, so bent is he on advising Lord Raglan as to his proceedings. I think I have already told you that Sir George Brown and Whitmore are gone to Malta for a little change; his wound would not heal here. We expect him back shortly, but he is past the age for winter campaigning, and will have to strike work, I fear.

"Two poor fellows lost their lives the night before last through having a charcoal fire in a closed tent. One was a Captain Swinton, of the Artillery, who was found dead with his hands towards his tent door trying to open it. I fear we shall hear of more such. Now that snow has actually fallen they can make themselves very snug by throwing up snow walls, fencing their tents closely round with snow, etc. I recollect the Russian army encamped in the snow at Constantinople being very warm and comfortable. . . ."

"*'Agamemnon,' off Sebastopol, January 7th, 7 a.m.*—Cold, cold, bitterly cold it is, with a keen north-easter, but not very strong. Thermometer as yet only 29° Fahrenheit, and I believe the mean average at Sebastopol during the winter is 32°. I sleep in flannel from head to foot. I should not get any sleep at all if I did not. Yet positively painful as is

* The railway from Balaklava to the camp.

the cold to me, it seems to agree wonderfully well with me. I never felt better and have the appetite of a wolf.

"You ask how we live? I answer, 'Very well; not as well as Sir Edmund wishes, but quite well enough, and for those who are fond of milk a cow has arrived in the 'Royal Albert,' sent to Sir Edmund by the Duke of Norfolk. I never think so very much of it myself; warm tea, moderately sweetened, is all I care about. But how many and great are my comforts compared to many! A good bed every night, good living and sure; plenty of warm clothing; a good ship, and regular correspondence with my loved ones. How many there are who have not these! How little did I expect ever to be so placed! To pass over so many who looked almost with certainty to it! I feel I am a fortunate man, and have much to be grateful for.

"I hope our southerly gales have ended; if the north winds are steady they may blow as hard as they like, this anchorage is quite a safe one.

"9 *p.m.*—The day has been a charming one; clear, brilliant, cold, but with little wind. . . .

"I am full of hope that we shall get the 'Royal Albert' snugly moored in one of these arms of the sea on the Khersonese. Sir Edmund is very full of it, and Spratt says it can be accomplished. I will do my best at it. I will not leave a stone unturned to bring it about, for this is very wretched work out here, and Sir Edmund cannot do the work required of him. He has decided to adopt my plan of sending up all the things to the camp that have come out for men and officers—that of unpacking the boxes and making the contents into small parcels for men to carry. I am sure I can do it well and easily, there will be lots of volunteers. Sir Edmund read me a letter this evening that he has written to Admiral Berkeley respecting the charges brought against the Navy about Balaklava, in which he mentions my name in such a manner as to make me *blush*.

He alludes to the work done there whilst 'Agamemnon' was lying there, how zealously I had executed and cleverly set the thing agoing; that it excited universal admiration. When 'Agamemnon' quitted it the duties devolved on others. You should see the difference already in the exertions of the captains of our noble transport steamers, who will do anything for him; he has undertaken to bring over immediately, from Varna to Eupatoria, 25,000 Turkish troops, which will complete Omar Pasha's army to 48,000 there; he has undertaken to keep them supplied with provisions and stores also, as well as to see that our own army has all the assistance it needs. He has desired me to arrange for the transport of comforts to the camp as I proposed. He enters into the most minute affairs concerning men and officers. He sees to all these things himself. He went away immediately after breakfast this morning; wrote the orders, as well as dictated to the captains of the steamers; had Captain Lushington down to hear what he had to say about the Naval Brigade; ordered a dozen of port wine up for Hillyar because he heard he was poorly; arranged fifty things with Admiral Bruat that were of great consequence, and enjoyed a gossip with his son Jack, who is still an invalid. It is fair to say that things are left in no very clear state, but he will set them all straight, I am sure, and infuse a new spirit into the service. We hear that seventeen poor French soldiers died of cold in the trenches last night, they went to sleep and never woke."

"*January 9th, 7 a.m.*—I had a nice note from Hillyar yesterday; he gives a cheery account of himself, though a gloomy one of the siege operations and the sickness in the army. Five assaults would not have cost in money or life what the weary length of this siege will. The mortality is very great; the men cannot get things that have been sent for them to cover them, and are positively in shreds. I have been very hopeful, because I thought individual

efforts would make up the want of inefficiency in the head. My opinion is that the Russian armies have retreated upon Simferopol and Bagtchiserai for the winter, where they will be well fed and cared for, leaving in Sebastopol a sufficient garrison provisioned; when the season has passed, or the extreme severity of it, they will advance upon our worn-out battalions and try another battle. I have in my own mind given up all idea of the place falling now; we have not our batteries ready, nor can we get them so, as the animals are dead and the munitions of war cannot be transported. Out of ten cavalry regiments they cannot muster 400 effective sabres; the horses have died from starvation and want of shelter, as well as by the enemy. Ought these things to be? Could they have been prevented? I reply, they could. Most men of common sense foresaw these things. Dignified silence in high quarters has been mistaken for genius, but disaster will awaken the country to the necessity of employing practical younger men to command armies and fleets. Oh, that a Wellington would spring up and lift us out of this mire! Sebastopol itself has been made ten times stronger than it ever was; work within work has sprung up, in which heavy guns are placed, as if they were bent upon contesting inch by inch of their town, and they are right. I commend them for it. We shall hold the Crimea and keep his ships shut up, but I think it will be long ere we take Sebastopol from the Czar. It will be humiliating to England and France, and an honour to Russia.* Yesterday one of our fine large screw steamers, iron built, full of French troops and stores, ran on shore in the most lubberly way possible, in the middle of the day, only 100 yards from the rocky beach. The troops were removed as quickly as possible and many of the stores got out, but we could not float her yesterday. This morning we have commenced again with steamers and anchors; we hope for better success,

* History has confirmed this opinion.

as they have been getting heavy weights out all night. The old lieutenant on board her as mail-agent counts some sixty-five summers; only fancy sending such a man on such a service, at this time! I now see more than ever the necessities that made the master minds and great men of former days. If the war lasts, which I think it will, I hope providence will raise up men for the time.

"9 a.m.—I am going away to see Spratt about a berth for the 'Royal Albert,' and may not be back quite in time for the mail closing, etc. . . ."

"*January 10th, noon.*—A rainy, gloomy day, and not an over-pleasant swell setting in, so that anxiety never ceases for ship or boats or men. We have fortunately got a supply of fresh meat and vegetables on board for two or three days, and we are shipping off a quantity to the ships stationed away. Sir Edmund has issued the routine he desired me to draw up for the fleet. His first memorandum regards the comforts of the whole, viz., ensuring the ready transmission and safe delivery of letters and parcels; his second ensures a method or routine adopted in his flagship, which he circulates for the guidance of the fleet, in order that the captains may regulate their own by it. It is nicely expressed and does not assume an undue interference with the internal economy of private ships, which has of late years caused much discontent and dissatisfaction to captains. I am sure we shall do well. I am building a regular post office in the 'Royal Albert.' I have already appointed a postmaster, who takes great interest in its working; he was my coxswain in the 'Arethusa,' and came here with me. I find he is the son of a Scotch clergyman, has been well educated, speaks French and Italian fairly, has been grounded in the classics, and is ever fond of reading, so that I fixed upon him at once. I have drawn up a code of regulations for the office and a parcels office which is also in progress, so that I hope for success in this all-important branch.

I aim at comfort, good discipline, and a methodical system ; if we get these, Sir Edmund will have the hearty co-operation of everybody. I regret to say that the 'Vengeance' is ordered home immediately, by which we shall lose Lord Edward, who is as good a little fellow as ever lived. . . ."

"*January 11th, 7 a.m.*—Sir Edmund read a portion of the leading article in the *Times* of the 23rd ult. last evening. I thought the storm of indignation threatening Lord Raglan would soon burst ; it has come at last in all truthfulness, a beautiful letter, and one that will touch the feelings of Englishmen because they know it to be full of solemn facts. I pity him from my heart, because he has so many fine qualities, but he lacks a very vital one—knowledge of the character of others—consequently he knows not how to select fitting men for proper posts.

"*10 p.m.*—I visited 'Royal Albert' to-day to see how the cabins, etc., progress, and find all things going well. A few of the 'Vengeance's' have volunteered, but I cannot expect many ; the temptation is very great to go home. . . .

"I am in great hopes that the troops are becoming better off day by day. I hear now of things reaching them, and that they have at length got eight days' provisions in a depôt at the camp, which sounds well. Affairs at Balaklava are working very well under Heath, who has drawn up a very excellent code of regulations, which are rigidly enforced. A parcels office is at work, and officers are beginning to find things that have been sent for them. How England shines in these matters of affectionate and benevolent sympathy ! In fact, in everything but in the naval and military branches of her administration, which are only systems of jobbing to suit the caprice of hasty, impetuous, lack-judgment men, who may wish their country well, but who take a very singular way of showing it. I have never respected the Press as much as I do now, because for the first time I have known it conducted

truthfully and patriotically. The *Times* will be a very valuable record of these eventful times."

"*'Agamemnon,' off Sebastopol, January 12th, 1855, noon.*—A keen north-easter and bitterly cold, but I am so well provided with comfortable clothing that I do not mind it.

"Sir Edmund has had a return of the system pursued in Balaklava harbour since Captain Heath has been doing the duty of harbour-master. He has drawn up an admirable code of regulations, which have been in operation for some time. I am sorry to see that there is an attempt to saddle the Navy in part with the grievous mismanagement of the military and transport services, which are wholly distinct and apart from the Navy. We have given assistance where and when required, and in doing so have almost taken the initiative; but we are only auxiliaries, upon which neither of the above services have any right to calculate. Our services as a navy are called for everywhere before the enemy, and the Lords of the Admiralty have very wisely ordered all the ships to be kept efficient and fully manned, and the seamen and marines to be embarked in all the screw ships of the line immediately, or the Navy will be submerged in the same endless mismanagement that is now crushing the energies of the Army. No army was ever composed of finer materials, none was ever so ill-governed or managed; no army had ever the attendance or assistance of such a fleet, or so much done for it by that fleet, as my Lord Raglan's; but root and branch they are bad and disorganized except when on the battlefield; the helplessness of the British soldier has become a byword. No wonder that it should, when I hear it made a boast of that professional matters are not allowed to be subjects for mess conversation. I asked the man who said this if he ever knew any men of the Army *discuss in their private rooms* professional topics; he answered, 'Never.' How, then, can they know their duty? Oh for an Iron Duke now! A

firm hand is wanted to grapple with the discipline, or non-discipline more properly, of our Army. It is reported of the Czar that he says he has not yet brought his three best generals into the field; when they have arrived in the Crimea the English may look out; he names January, February, and March to succeed those who have fallen or been removed for having committed blunders. I fear he calculates well. Huts are not yet here, winter is. Clothing is here, but not yet issued, because the roads are bad. And yet some colonels of regiments have provided everything by better management than others, and their regiments are doing well, therefore it *is* to be done."

"13th, 6.30 *a.m.*—After a bitterly cold north-easter our more disagreeable companion, the south-wester, has returned upon us, bringing a sea that is by no means agreeable; the change took place in the middle watch. I was in great hopes he had taken his departure for a few weeks, and that neighbour Frost would eventually keep him back. It cannot be denied that this is about one of the worst anchorages, as far as communication with the shore or our neighbours is concerned, that could possibly be.

"I see the 'St. Jean d'Acre' is coming here immediately, and one or two other screws; what we want with so many here I cannot quite see—they rather increase the difficulty of supplying them with fresh meat and vegetables. However, in that particular we are doing better. Sir Edmund has opened a communication with various places, and has requested the Turkish Government, through the ambassador, to instruct its agents to have dépôts of these ready to be put on board large steamers when they arrive. The 'Megæra' came up three days ago from Sinope with 400 fine sheep, fifty fair bullocks, and four days' supply of excellent vegetables for the whole fleet; the mutton is excellent. Sir Edmund has said constantly, and dinned it into the ears of the generals and admirals, that the fleet

and army might be supplied as easily and quickly as Smithfield if only arrangements were made. Had he been attended to many a poor fellow's life would have been saved; we should not have had scurvy in our ships, or the very serious malady called scorbutic diarrhœa in the army, which is carrying off its many victims. Though the country has been and is so lavish of its money, the small, niggard minds of men withheld the shillings at a fearful sacrifice of human life and bodily suffering; never calculating the value of the man *pecuniarily* to the country, who when dead cannot be easily replaced, and when sick or invalided will cost ten times what might have been laid out to keep him well. Sir Edmund said to Lord Raglan before the commissary-general, Mr. Filder, the other day, 'What does the meat you get cost per pound?' '6*d.*,' was the answer, 'when it comes from so-and-so.' 'What does it cost you to get it from another place named?' '1*s.*' 'Then why hesitate?' said the admiral; 'would you not willingly give 2*s.* 6*d.* per pound to get it at all to keep the men healthy?' All present at once assented. The same in the purchase of baggage ponies. Sir Edmund said pay £50—or £100, if necessary; recollect that every pony will do the work of three men in transport, and probably save the lives of 300. We have had 300 boxes of oranges sent up from Malta, and have served out three per man to everyone in the fleet as an anti-scorbutic. The Army has suffered so severely that I much doubt if any of the remedies now put in operation will restore health. The article in the *Times* has affected all at headquarters sorely, the more so that they feel the truth of it.

"9 *a.m.*—I find the mail is to close shortly, if the weather do but permit of our getting it on board the 'Sphynx,' of which I have serious doubts. Squalls of sleet and snow with a good deal of sea getting up may, I fear, prevent it. . . .

"I see no chance of getting into the 'Royal Albert' for at

least a fortnight, by which time, I trust, she will be in the bay or small harbour near the lighthouse."

"14th.—. . . Scarcely a dark spot is to be seen upon the land from the beach to the mountain-top far away ; all, all is a pure, dazzling white, almost blinding. I am not sorry to see it. Now for a good frost to-night, and they will be better off in the camp. It is quite astonishing how much the health and spirits revive when the weather is clear and dry, never mind how cold it be. I hear so on all sides ; but the wet kills them. I will not—that is, I need not—dwell further upon the sad mismanagement and ignorance that has brought our beautiful army to such misery. The *Times* is full of stinging truths that will stir the country and awake it, I fancy, to the rotten system that prevails. Two months ago the fearful gale strewed the shore outside and inside Balaklava with *débris* of wrecks that would have provided the Army with firewood for three months had any steps been taken to collect it. I have told you much about it; many naval officers have pointed it out at Balaklava. Imagine Sir Edmund's astonishment yesterday when he received a letter from Quartermaster-General —, whose business it is to see to such matters, to say that Lord Raglan had just heard that a quantity of wood from wrecks lay on the rocks outside of Balaklava, and requesting the assistance of the Navy to collect it in boats for the Army. He will get his answer, he may rest assured, for though Sir Edmund is one of the kindest-hearted men living, and will do his best to assist, he will not allow the neglect and imbecility of military functionaries to be saddled upon the Navy. Mr. Quartermaster-General — will get what I call a home-thrust, or a hit between the eyes that will arouse his sleeping faculties. The fact is, instead of being practical men, they are drones of office, mere quill-drivers, in vulgar parlance. The commander-in-chief has done a graceful thing this morning. He had a lieutenant's commission to give away. Now a great many

young fellows have been introduced to him, but he sent for me and said he wished, in compliment to the ship for the support he received from everybody on October 17th, to give it to the senior mate of the 'Agamemnon.' A very nice fellow fortunately held the post, and as I spoke favourably of him, he was sent for. Sir Edmund said, 'Whenever I have sent for him before, I have scolded him tremendously.' So when he came up, we—that is, Cleeve, Pearson, myself, and the admiral—assumed a solemn expression, and he a somewhat anxious one, as though he had done something for which he was to be taken to task. The chief began by desiring him to be seated, and after a complimentary preamble to himself, to me, and the ship, told him although many were looking to him, he selected him for the commission he had to bestow. Poor Mead was so overcome, as well as overjoyed at so agreeable a release from purgatorial suspense, that he jumped up with his eyes full to shake hands with the admiral, then with me, his heart being too full to say more than 'Thank you!' After a moment he recovered himself, and said, 'I hope you will excuse me, sir. I was taken aback. I did not know what you were going to say,' etc. Such acts will win golden opinions for our new chief; he knows the way to the hearts of those serving under him. He knew nothing of this young officer or his friends, but he has seen him and the ship he served in do her duty. . . .

"My father is more liberal to my Lord Raglan than those who have been eye-witnesses here are likely to prove. Tell my father that the troops required no leader. They thought he was a worthy pupil of his great master, and at his order faced death as coolly as they would go to a meal; but they are now losing confidence in a man they have scarcely ever seen. He was excellent in the office, for such a genius as the Duke—wrote well what he was desired, applied himself closely to the desk, never divulged what he wrote, or imbibed

a portion of the wit that dictated the despatch he penned—he became consequently an excellent routine man in an office, to keep things as the Duke made and left them, but to get beyond was impossible. Read the leading article in the 29th December, it fully explains all I mean respecting what I have so often expressed. The tools are all that can be desired, but the better they are the more skilful the workman required to use them. The finest, bravest, most wonderfully heroic army; the most costly, the finest, the best-calculated transport service that the world could imagine, surpassing far what the world ever saw; as fine a naval force as could be collected; such were the tools sent by an enthusiastic country to face a powerful warrior who threw down the gauntlet to Europe. Who were selected to command this magnificent force by the Government? What were their antecedents? On shore, a high-minded, chivalrous *English gentleman*, who had been at a desk for years, perpetuating on paper what *had been*. Afloat, I need not go beyond an Admiralty jobbing-stool and a popular Greenwich election-room for the selection of a man to command Britain's fleet in such a crisis. The nation now weeps, positively in tears of blood, and when she recovers the first outbreak of her grief she will pour forth her indignation on those who have brought her to so much misery. Providence has wisely done it, no doubt, to humble us somewhat; but I am one—possessing, I trust, proper feelings when referring to the will of God—who thinks we have sorely tempted Providence. I question much if a mourning country will look as amiably on Lord Raglan's faults as my father does. *On paie pour l'expérience par défaut*, and we are paying dearly enough; would that money could cancel it; but men are the coin, passing onwards towards eternity. Nevertheless, we shall come out of it and be victorious, however frightful is the cost. The French are beginning to grumble at inactivity, and assail Canrobert as he passes; whilst the English



GRAVES AT THE HEAD OF THE HARBOUR OF BALAKLAVA.

From a picture by W. Simpson, Esq. Messrs. Colnaghi & Co.

do as they are told, and die uncomplaining. Do not despond about the want of generals. Younger blood is required, more vitality is wanting. Sir George Brown will be here again immediately, but he has passed the age. Many of the colonels are quite fitted, many of the captains even."

"*H.M.S. 'Agamemnon,' off Sebastopol, January 21st, 1855.*
—I consider the whole system adopted in Army and Navy rotten at the very core; they are sources of patronage in which birth is valued above wit; where the purely practical man is voted a bore. The demoralization of the British Army is complete. I suppose no army was ever in such a state. So I have heard Sir George Brown often say, and his experience is considerable. It is remarked now that the British Army will not be driven but dwindled out of the Crimea. At present they form a mere contingent to the French Army, who look upon the entire of our organization as faulty. The French have their Ambulance Corps, their Transport Corps, their Police Corps, their Commissariat Corps, all in separate and independent branches, working systematically one into the other in perfect order. Why, only fancy, 300 mules were expected at Balaklava for the commissariat, fine animals from Spain, with muleteers, nearly all the previous baggage animals having died from exposure, starvation, excess of work, and cold. Heath, of the '*Sans-pareil*,' seeing what would be the fate of the new animals also, went on shore, fixed upon a piece of ground, and built a stable for them, whilst Mr. Commissary-General — looked on open-mouthed as the Turks do, holding at the same time unlimited means of appliances in his hands. I said early in the campaign, and I see more forcibly the truth of what I said and felt, that an Iron Man was wanting, regardless of all conventional humbug, who would do as the great Duke did, look into things himself, see to their working or *non-working*, and remove man after man of the incom-

petent until he got the man required. The drones, the ignoramuses, the imbeciles, the *helpless* in the Army are legion, one cannot believe them Englishmen, high and low alike. The regimental officers are better. The men of the line are not over-wise in caring for themselves, but both do their duty worthy of England before the enemy, and should be better provided by all the extraneous branches, such as, as I have said above, the French have."

"*Off Sebastopol, February 11th, 1855.*—The 'Spiteful' made her number with the flag of Admiral Stewart, accompanied by Sir George Brown. They dined with us; the former looks worn, old, and much altered, the latter as fresh and vigorous as when he commenced the campaign; he cannot get his hand quite up to his head yet, but the stiffness is wearing off. We gave him a hearty welcome to the old ship; groups of the ship's company collected on deck and showed him in their countenances great pleasure to see him back.

"Mr. Simpson, the artist, is making a sketch of a scene on the 'Agamemnon's' poop, bringing forward the admiral, your humble servant, and the staff. The group is nicely arranged and the likenesses promise to be good. I will have a copy if it be engraved.* The barometer having fallen much since yesterday morning I have been expecting a gale, but as yet it holds off, rain with a southerly wind having come instead.

"Admiral Stewart was specially agreeable to me. Sir Edmund himself is not looking well; he shows much anxiety in his face and has a nasty cough in the morning; his cough is the signal by which I know he is up."

"*12th, 7 a.m.*—Yesterday afternoon it was blowing a gale from the N.W., with snow, sleet, and a heavy sea. This is as beautiful a morning as can be seen, with a high barometer. I hope it may continue so for two days, as we are to move on the day after to-morrow, but it is a most uncertain climate;

* I have, most unfortunately, been unable to obtain a copy of this sketch.

we can never depend on it for an hour. Mr. Simpson is making a very good group on the 'Agamemnon's' poop. I have stood for my portrait, but see as yet but an indifferent likeness; the figure he has struck off very well, but the face is too full and old; I have a glass in my left hand and am addressing the admiral. Cleeve, with the admiral's military nephew, are a little back; the flag-lieutenant is running up the poop ladder; a signal midshipman and boy are standing near, and in the background are some of the ship's company."

"13th.—On Sunday afternoon it blew a gale at N.W., with a very heavy sea. Last evening, when Admiral Stewart and most of the captains were here at dinner, almost a gale came on from S.S.E., off the land, but so strong that they were all compelled to remain here for the night. Talbot and Keppel slept in my cabin—one on the deck, the other on the couch. Admiral Stewart took the deck in the admiral's cabin, and sundry other captains, all of whom left us this morning at six. It is Sir Edmund's last gathering, as we leave to-morrow, weather permitting.

"Sir G. Brown, who is in robust health, visited the camp yesterday; he will land for good in a day or two. I am sorry to see that the *Times*, which has done so much real good, should be dealing in absurdities and personalities; he is now doing harm, and there is little doubt but that it will induce the Russians to make an attack upon our position very soon. Our men have never received great-coats from the French in any one instance, and had the French army given the support in early days to ours in proportion to their numerical superiority, matters would never have become so bad. Lord Raglan was never sufficiently firm with Canrobert on this point, and took more ground than he had force to defend. Then, as to warm clothing, our men are actually selling quantities to the French troops—so much for their gratitude—but this tells against discipline, however much it

may prove that they are over-clothed. Any luxury may be procured in the camp at a moderate rate—preserved meats, wines, anything in short. Pearson, whose opinion I value, says that things are looking up, and that a good fight is what they sigh for to dispel the *ennui* of the siege. There is no doubt whatever that the Russians are very uncomfortable; they cannot supply a large army as we can, it is impossible. They are alarmed also at the large force under Omar Pasha assembling at Eupatoria, which musters now 30,000 good soldiers, who have full confidence in their chief. My spirits begin to rise, hour by hour my hopes increase. Our Army is decidedly on the mend. . . .”

“‘*Royal Albert*,’ February 16th.—On the 14th, the weather proving propitious, Sir Edmund made up his mind after a great struggle to quit our good and true ‘Agamemnon.’ When morning came, February 14th, I went to him as usual for my morning gossip, and found him in terrible spirits. At length he said, ‘No, I won’t go, I’ll stay another week.’ But that would have been attended with such serious inconvenience to all parties concerned, that I persuaded him to carry out his determination of the previous night—to go if the weather permitted. We commenced our preparations forthwith, had a steamer out, and moved all our goods and chattels at once. After dinner, Sir Edmund made a farewell address to the ‘Agamemnon’s’ company, which was well received. We quitted her, amidst cheers that rent the air, and I believe many a regret, at two o’clock, towing in the admiral’s galley, with a crew of officers concealed on board for the purpose of pulling the chief to his new ship, which greatly delighted him. Yesterday I was employed on a court-martial all day on board the ‘Hannibal,’ so that I saw little or nothing of my new ship. I read my commission to-day at one o’clock, and said my say in a few words, by way of introducing myself to the attention of my new shipmates, after which I spent three hours making a minute inspection

of the ship—a noble ship—and will be, I hope, a good man-of-war.

"All accounts from the camp are cheery: health better, spirits good, ground dry, provisions plentiful, the railroad progressing. One of our spies has come in—a known and trusted man—who reports that the Russian army is suffering dreadfully; starvation, sickness, without medicine to relieve it; roads blocked up with broken-down waggons; no cattle to be procured to draw them; and general misery. This rather agrees with the marked slackness in the enemy's fire for some days past. *Hundreds* of vessels arrive daily with provisions and stores—I say hundreds, but about forty have arrived in the last twenty-four hours. I scarcely know myself in this superb cabin—I am wonderfully well lodged. I do not think I ever saw a prettier cabin for its size than this. When I have time I will send you a plan of it."

"17th.—I find this noble ship in a very bad state below, dirty to a degree beyond what I had conceived possible; the smell is something horrible to speak of. I have ordered a *dig-out* forthwith, or we shall have sickness to a certainty. Admiral —— is not improving Balaklava. Admiral Grey is working a reform at Constantinople. The railway extends a mile, and will be given up to traffic at stated periods in about four or six days, when it does not interfere with the workmen. French troops continue to pour in by thousands, and supplies are abundant. We expect hard cold weather in the coming six weeks, but I think that the heart of the winter is broken. Fellowes is appointed."

CHAPTER XIX

1855

THE next letter to my mother from which I have been able to make extracts bears date May 23rd. I therefore draw upon the pages of my father's diary to fill up the interval.

“‘*Royal Albert*,’ *Kazatch*, *March 6th*.—Heard of the death of the Czar Nicolas whilst dining on board the ‘Rodney’ with King.”

“*March 9th*.—Have just heard that Sir J. Graham, Mr. Gladstone, and Sydney Herbert have resigned office.

“Dined with Admiral Bruat.”

“*12th*.—Omar Pasha came up from Eupatoria to a conference of generals and admirals, and returned with me to the ship to dinner. He is a quiet, gentlemanly man, vivacious in conversation, and with much intelligence in his face.”

“*23rd*.—Blowing strong from the south. Last night at midnight the Russians made a sortie on the French and English parallels, but were repulsed with great loss on both sides.

“Dined on board the ‘Rodney.’”

“*April 2nd*.—French ships went down to Eupatoria for Turkish troops.”

“*7th*.—Took up our northern anchor and backing anchor.

“Five thousand Turkish troops have arrived from Eupatoria.”

“*8th*.—Bent sails; prepared for sea. Omar Pasha has

arrived in 'Valorous' from Eupatoria, 25,000 men of his army having preceded him."

"9th.—Wind at 4 a.m. south, with drizzling rain; barometer fell from 29.90 at noon, yesterday, to 29.30 this morning. Unmoored and remoored, having intended to move out; but admiral decides to remain owing to bad weather."

"10th.—Came out of Kazatch and anchored in line before Sebastopol. Hear that poor Twyford, of 'London,' is killed in the trenches. Bombardment going on."

"11th.—Bombardment going on, firing of the allied batteries very sharp and effective."

"13th.—Landed with Sir G. Brown, and walked to French left attack. Later accompanied Sir Edmund, Admiral Bruat, and Charnier in the barge of the French admiral to sound along the shore towards the quarantine battery, and try the position of leading lights for vessels to go in at night. 'Valorous' went in and opened fire at ten o'clock."

14th.—Swell from W.N.W. Captain Spratt, of 'Spitfire,' reported the electric wire being securely laid between the monastery of St. George and Cape Kaliakra, in Bulgaria. It took the steamer seventy-four hours to lay it out, a length of 300 miles.

"Light rain. A magazine in one of the Russian earthworks blew up in the morning opposite the French batteries; loss in the Naval Brigade considerable. Commander-in-chief at headquarters."

"17th.—Weather foggy. Firing very heavy on all sides. 'Wrangler' stole in this afternoon during the fog, and threw in many shot and shell."

"21st.—A gun burst on board the 'Dauntless' last night on the second round, with full charge and a shell, when

attacking the batteries. The crews of all the starboard guns, except the captains of guns, had been ordered to stand on the port side, so as to give the ship a list and increase the elevation, so that luckily there was no loss of life. The gun—a 56 cwt. 68-pounder—burst into innumerable pieces like glass, doing immense damage to the ship, rending decks, beams, etc. Every piece of glass in the after part of the ship was broken. Many had the most providential escapes. I never could have conceived that there would be so much *débris* from the explosion of one gun. The senior lieutenant had the coat ripped off his back by a brass stanchion that was hurled from its place, but without inflicting even a scratch on him.”

“23rd.—Weighed at 2 a.m. Cleared for action, and loaded the starboard broadside with shell. Proceeded in the direction of the batteries, following the ‘Montebello.’ Observed her stop, and presently received a message from the French admiral that her engines had broken down, and that he was unable to proceed to the attack. Some time elapsed, and day began to dawn, so the admiral unwillingly gave the order to return to the anchorage. Fiddled topgallant masts and reoccupied our position in the line.”

“29th.—Lord Stratford de Redcliffe came on board.”

“30th.—Weighed at 4 a.m. for Eupatoria under steam and sail.”

“May 1st.—Left Eupatoria at 2.30 a.m. and arrived off Sebastopol at 6.30 a.m., when Lord Stratford took his departure.”

“2nd.—An expedition on foot to attack Kertch.”

“3rd.—Sailed for Kertch in company with French admiral. Ships carrying French and English troops to the number of 11,000. Flotilla consists of thirty vessels. Left the anchorage at sunset, and steered N.W. to deceive the enemy.”

"4th.—Fog came on in the afternoon. Employed making arrangements for disembarkation of the troops.

"In the afternoon a small French steamer overtook us, with instructions for the French portion of the expedition to return, by order of General Canrobert. Officers and men very much annoyed as well as surprised."

"5th.—Arrived at the rendezvous at 3 a.m. After a consultation it was decided to return immediately. Shaped our course for Sebastopol; weather very fine."

"6th.—Stood close in to Yalta and other places. Scenery quite pretty; the palaces and mansions of Woronzoff and other Russian nobles very fine. A beautiful morning and all nature gay; anchored at Kamiesh at noon."

"19th.—Heard of General Canrobert's resignation of the command of the French army to General Pélissier.

"Decided that a fresh expedition to Kertch should be undertaken."

"22nd.—Embarked 700 Turkish troops in each ship of the line, total 5000; also British infantry, 3000. French infantry, 7000, and three batteries French, two batteries Turkish, and one battery English. Sailed at 8 p.m. for rendezvous near Kertch.

"11 p.m.—Fog has come on, fleet not in company."

I here resume the extracts from letters to my mother detailing the successful operations at Kertch, and the return of the expedition to Sebastopol."

"*'Royal Albert,' May 23rd, 1855, 10 p.m. Running for Kertch.*—To-morrow, at dawn, we hope to be at the rendezvous, making our final preparations for the disembarkation of our force near Kertch, which we intend to take and occupy, D.V. Our force consists of 3700 British infantry and one battery of artillery; 7000 French infantry and three

batteries of artillery; 5000 Turkish infantry and two batteries of artillery. The English flotilla comprises thirty-seven ships; the French fifteen. All are in spirits. Sir G. Brown commands. We left Kamiesh at eight last evening, but a fog came on which prevented many getting away, and this morning the 'Agamemnon' telegraphed that the French troops repulsed a sortie from the garrison, of eight Russian regiments, and made a simultaneous attack with complete success, but, as might be expected, with heavy loss on both sides. I assist at the disembarkation to-morrow under Captain Talbot.

"The climate is delicious, the nights perfect, moon and stars brilliant, water like glass, sky cloudless. We ask but for success. I pray to be permitted to lay a laurel at your feet."

"26th, 9 a.m.—Here is the laurel, a complete and bloodless victory. Kertch, Yenikale, taken, with numerous guns, vast quantities of stores, magazines, etc., very many vessels laden with vast supplies for the army in the Crimea, and the coast as far as the eye could see lined with burning wrecks. I have not time to-day to go very generally into a description of how it has been done, but I will give you an outline as best I can.

"I was anxious to have dated this from the Sea of Azov, into which the admiral took us all yesterday, but the excitement was too great, and I was too fagged. Well, then, to go back to where I left you on the 23rd, when I bid you good-night. At 3 a.m. on the 24th we reached the rendezvous, where several ships were assembled, and all captains were summoned by signal, and the result of my labours put into their hands in writing. As soon as they returned to their ships, and the admirals had communicated, the smaller vessels formed line and led up for the place so well selected by that fine fellow Spratt, the officer in charge of marine surveying, as the place of disembarkation. The great ships,

led by 'Royal Albert,' crept in after them, until we reached 29 feet, when the anchor was let go, and signal made 'Out all boats and land British troops.' Whilst the boats were forming and getting in tow of our little steamers, the covering steamers took their stations along the beach to protect the landing. The vessels of light draught got tolerably close in, and by noon a goodly array of British and French infantry were thrown upon the beach, followed rapidly by artillery, baggage, horses, etc. Night closed in, however, before we had got all the material on shore, but as it was imperative for the army to move at dawn, we worked all night. On our first approach the Cossacks showed themselves, and galloped forward a few guns, but an occasional shot and shell from the steamers sent them galloping to the rear again, and left us undisputed possession of the field. At dawn, then, yesterday, the troops went forward. We captains, with all our boats, got to our ships about half-past ten, much fagged, but the chief was getting together all he could muster to go up in the 'Banshee' to the Sea of Azov, and as he seemed to wish us *all* to go, I put my face into a basin of water, donned clean outsides, and, after a hasty meal, we quitted our anchorage about noon, in as brilliant a day as ever shone upon man. We wended our way through the straits and reached Yenikale, the stronghold of the entrance, just as the troops entered; here the flotilla of gunboats and small steamers destined for the Sea of Azov, under the orders of Captain Lyons, awaited us, and all weighing together, led by the persevering Spratt, senior officer of the survey, we entered in triumph the enemy's waters. Now I must go back, because I hear you asking how it was we were permitted to pass through so strong a position unresisted. Whilst the troops were landing, the 'Snake,' which was on the look-out, asked permission to chase enemy's steamer; it was granted instantly, and off she dashed and was soon engaged with *three* steamers, and at long range

a battery of heavy guns. I was too busily occupied to watch the proceedings, but lookers-on said it was the most exciting thing possible; by Cleeve's description it must have been beautiful. Seeing her state, off went a flight of steamers, by signal to support, with ardent hearts to her assistance. The enemy seeing the advance of such a force, and the landing of an army to take them in reverse, began to think their case hopeless, for about four o'clock a grand explosion took place at Fort Paul, followed by another and another from powerful batteries all along the strait, filling the space above with *débris*, and shaking the ships and ground for miles round as though shocks of an earthquake were occurring. No sooner had these obstacles been removed, for all firing ceased from them, than on dashed the steamers and opened fire on Kertch, where they destroyed three steamers, took about 100 prizes, and forced the enemy there to destroy and evacuate the works, when they again advanced towards Yenikale. Here the fire of the enemy became brisk for a short time, but soon they were convinced of the hopelessness of resistance, and fearing the consequences of delay, they blew up the great magazine at six o'clock with a tremendous shock. During the night the heavens for miles round were illuminated with blazing wrecks, store-houses, etc., the stillness broken occasionally by the explosion of shells as the fires reached them. Thus was gained possession of a strait full of natural obstacles, important strongholds of the enemy fell into our hands, and the Sea of Azov was laid open without the loss of a man to the allies. After despatching Captain Lyons with his fine command, we returned in the 'Banshee' to Yenikale, where we landed to take a peep at our conquest. The sight was anything but agreeable, for the French troops are very lawless under such circumstances; they destroy for the mere love of destruction; everything they could get hold of they broke, until at last a fire broke out which excited the ire of the generals,

who called the men to arms, tired though they were, and made them extinguish it. To the honour of the Highlanders and Marines, the only British troops landed, they preserved perfect discipline, and the 93rd Regiment extinguished the fire. The position is a perfect one as regards strength, and Kertch itself is prettily situated. But I am a little ahead. I have omitted to say that a great work on the opposite shore which would have offered a serious obstacle to the passage was also blown up by the enemy—a grand sight, as indeed each was. We had, I think, twelve or fourteen explosions in all. The guns are very heavy 36-pounders, beautifully cast and finished; there are not many brass. At Kertch were 140,000 quarters of barley and 80,000 quarters of oats set fire to by the enemy before evacuating. A gun factory was blown up by our sappers as the army marched through. At Yenikale we find a naval establishment, lighters, stores, and—what is of more importance—12,000 tons of coal and patent fuel; in fact, we have made a most successful *coup*. The whole has been Sir Edmund's doing from first to last; he frequently said, 'If you put a bold face on it, the whole thing will fall like a pack of cards, and the generals will be disgusted at having nothing to do.' So it has proved. The practical effect will be the cutting off all supplies by sea from the Volga and all the northern rivers, isolating Circassia, and attacking the Crimea in the north. The moral effect, I think, will be to force Russia to loosen the ties between Persia and herself, to encourage the Circassians, and last, not least, to raise the spirits and hopes of our gallant army before Sebastopol. Now will be the time to open fire and storm; it will be simultaneous with the appearance of our steamers before Arabat, a place exactly opposite to Kaffa, in the Azov. There will be seventeen pennants in the sea to-day, which I think will sweep it out. Nothing that can float to carry a man or a sack of flour will be left; all must be taken or destroyed, then the shoe will

begin to pinch. I think the people in England will be pleased at the thing, and satisfied to have such results without a butcher's bill. We have not taken many prisoners; a few soldiers were found in Yenikale drunk, supposed to have been made so to blow up the place effectually. The guns were spiked, but not otherwise injured. The prize-money will not, I fear, be worth much among so many, even if it be anything. One of the Russian steamers, when chased, cast off a very large launch or lighter, which drifted with the current into a bay, where young Green made a prize of her. She proves to be laden with all the public documents; books of every description from the public offices at Kertch; peculiar ornamented little gilded cabinets surmounted with a gilded Russian eagle; several enamelled heads of our Saviour encased in silver and gilded frames enclosed in cases with glazed fronts; ladies' dresses; abundance of petticoats, chemises, etc.; two cases of champagne—in fact, almost any and every thing you can think of, packed to carry off. Great is the fun while they are unpacking them all on the quarter-deck. We find charts, plans, etc., and a whole Russian mail, among which is a letter from Sebastopol, only six days ago, to prepare for 15,000 sick coming from Sebastopol."

"*'Royal Albert,' Kertch, May 29th, 1855.*—I am on my way in the little 'Danube' steamer to Yenikale, where I have a large party under Wilmot embarking our prize guns. I came from there to Kertch, where we all have large parties embarking government stores of all descriptions. I was there the whole of yesterday and took a good survey of the place. Much havoc has been committed, in part by the French troops when they first passed through it, but much more afterwards by the Tartar population, who, on being freed from the iron rule of their harsh taskmasters, have committed every possible depredation. Since that some of the Turkish troops have strayed from the camp

and been committing frightful enormities. One brute killed a poor innocent child. He was, however, pointed out yesterday to the French guard, who made the attempt to arrest him, but as he resisted and made use of his arms, they shot him at once. Five others resisted also and were severely wounded by the French. Last evening a party of the 10th Hussars came down, and on guards being placed in different parts of the town confidence was restored. We purposely walked about armed in order to assure the people. It was a distressing sight. Men, women, and children came out to kiss our hands, weeping bitterly over the sufferings a few hours had brought upon them. The poor women, I fear, have in many instances been violently treated. However, a town police, with permission to bear firearms, was at once formed, and by last evening they were walking about happy, selling readily their goods. I regret much to say that the Museum, a very valuable one indeed, has been completely destroyed. We visited the building, and were shocked to see such complete destruction, most valuable vases shattered to atoms, in fact everything broken up into the smallest bits. A very severe reflection on the French and English was written in chalk on one of the portals, telling us that history would record our vandalism. The government buildings are very extensive, and were tolerably stocked. A factory that had just commenced work, worth about £20,000, falls into our hands. It was set on fire by order of the general as he marched through, but we find very valuable machinery quite perfect, and were employed yesterday shipping much of it off. We intend to take all that can be of use to us and destroy the remainder. They were casting shot and shell, making gun-carriages, etc. To-day we intend to blow up a foundry near, and as soon as the stores are completely cleared out we intend to burn all the public buildings. It is very exciting work. At the lazaretto, which is a very extensive affair, we found much of value.

I took off a beautiful fire-engine worth £300, and many items. The house of the governor, or head of the establishment, was very handsomely furnished, but all the furniture there was ripped open to see if it contained treasure concealed. My coxswain carried off a fine-grown geranium from the garden for my stern-walk, and Hay took off a chest of drawers for himself. All government property becomes that of our Crown. I took the vane-spindle from the top of the flagstaff in the battery, which I intend to keep as a trophy, though it is but a rude affair. The Russians have effectually destroyed their powder magazines, but nothing else. The batteries are uninjured, and the guns simply spiked. We are, however, completing the demolition of all the works facing the sea, removing all the guns, and breaking up the carriages. I took a nice little pony phaeton yesterday out of the general's house at the lazaretto to give to the soldiers to carry their provisions upon. As we did not get back to our ships to dinner until nine o'clock, it was twelve before I got to bed, and it is now six. But the life is a pleasant one; anything is better than that terrible stagnation. The news from Sebastopol is very cheering. Péliissier has put new life into everything; he is a determined man, and Canrobert says he is happier as the second, so all is well. We are going to push on to Anapa with our whole force almost immediately. The troops are to go. Then we shall open Circassia, and the robber's strength there will begin to fail him. Sir Edmund will win his peerage yet, depend on it; he is very ambitious of it, without doubt. Had he some years to spare, he would do it easily; he could with advantage get rid of a few. He is certainly too old; for were it not for the good-will and zealous co-operation of every officer under him, the wheels would not work."

"*May 31st, 5 a.m.*—I am obliged to write now as I can get time. I left 'Royal Albert' early yesterday morning in my gig and ran up to Yenikale with a nice breeze, a distance

of twelve miles ; the little steamer that was to follow me unluckily struck on a rock, pierced her bottom, and was obliged to be put upon the beach to save her, so that I had to sail back from Yenikale to Kertch, five miles. My visit to the former was to communicate with Wilmot, who is there embarking the enemy's guns. I took my breakfast with Sir G. Brown, who commands there. Hay, of the 'Hannibal,' carried off two fine 68-pounder guns from this place yesterday, and I embarked nearly all the costly machinery of the factory. They cast all their shot there and made Minié bullets. We find large quantities of newly-cast shot under the rubbish and many newly-made and making bullet-moulds ; we find also vast depôts of military clothing and meal. In fact, the more we see of the place, the more satisfied we are of the importance of it to the Russians as far as concerns the Crimea.

"Besides the four steamers destroyed here, the gunboats under Captain Lyons destroyed, up to Monday last, some more at Berdiansk* (the great depôt of corn and supplies for the Crimea), and 106 vessels. They then ran for Arabat, the fort opposite Kaffa, and, after firing a few shot and shell at it, blew it up. From thence they went northwards, to sweep completely the Sea of Azov. We do not intend to leave a single thing that can float to carry men or provisions. The night before last an explosion and fire took place on the opposite shore in Taman Bay, which proved to be the destruction of Fanagoria by the enemy. As soon as we have thrown up the entrenchments before Yenikale, and destroyed all that is necessary here, on we go to Anapa, leaving the Turkish troops to hold the place. This arrangement much alarms the Christian population, many of whom are moving away to the interior. We hear that the Russian forces retreated back sixty miles towards Kaffa, where they are said to be collecting, but they will be too late to do anything here now."

* On the north shore of the Sea of Azov.

"*June 1st.*—I wrote the above on board the 'Furious' yesterday, but to-day I am on board my own ship, after two days' hard work. Thus we have struck a severe blow at Russia, I hope, or at least at her army in the Crimea. The admiral very kindly sent me in the news to Kertch, where I was employed destroying a factory, embarking very valuable machinery, quantities of flour, etc. I did not get on board until 11 p.m., when I took some cold lamb and tea, and went to bed for a good night's rest. . . . I send you a sketch of a Circassian found among some papers in our prize."

"*'Royal Albert,' June 2nd, 1855.*—I amused myself for half an hour yesterday looking over some packages of letters found in the aforesaid prize. I cannot read one of them, but they are put up so nicely, and contain with them so many little souvenirs, such as dried flowers, beautifully-embossed pink note-paper with embroidered edges, a portrait (badly executed) taken from a medallion of a young lady, that I think they may be love-letters, and am tormented with the mischievous idea of wishing to know the meaning of them. I have an interpreter on board, and intend to make him examine the packages in search of state secrets or information of importance. I brought off with me the night before last a Mr. Platt, an engineer, who has been twelve years here employed by the Russian Government. He applied, on the outbreak of the war, to be sent to England, but was refused, and told that if he wished they would send him to the interior, but that he must not quit them. He decided to remain at Kertch with his family. He now offers service with us. His family will be sent home, and compensation made to him for a steam mill which is to be destroyed. He is able to give us very valuable information, his wife's sister being married to a captain in the Russian Navy commanding one of the ships remaining at Sebastopol. He has travelled all round the Sea of Azov, and a great deal in Circassia. He tells us that the sufferings of the troops defending

Sebastopol have been surpassing belief; that on the first two days of the last bombardment 8000 men were placed *hors de combat*; that the sufferings throughout have been enormous: 80,000 men set out from Warsaw at the commencement of the winter to relieve the Crimea, and 30,000 only arrived, many of these even being in a very bad state. I have brought off the bell of the factory for our own in course of erection at Kamiesh, as well as the brass globes for moulding the 24-pounder shot. Our object has been to take all we could carry off from the government stores, and respect private property; but I am sorry to say that our allies are less scrupulous. Their seamen entered the dwellings of people who had absconded, and completely sacked them, carrying off superb furniture, dresses, both male and female, etc. The only trophies I have are a tripod standing on a pediment, containing on each one of its three sides the laws of Peter the Great. On the top of this piece of furniture stands a gilded eagle. The whole is placed on a table covered with a crimson cloth fringed with gold. One of these emblems of sovereignty stands in the principal room of all public departments, but in each room of the halls of court. All passers-by are supposed to take off their hats on passing it as acknowledging the emblem. I have also a rug with an oriental scene not badly executed, and a picture-frame, into which I have put a portrait of Sir Edmund. I wanted a fur for you, but they were not remarkable, and were sought after on the lower deck, so I did not allow myself to seek for one. I have a nice geranium also, taken from the house of the governor of the lazaretto. I saw there very beautiful rosewood sofas, chairs, tables, lying about in sad confusion, ripped open in search of treasure, legs broken off, etc. A grand pianoforte was literally hacked into with pickaxes and smashed to atoms. I saw also in many houses beautiful furniture strewed about, quite destroyed. War is a terrible thing; I never wish to see it

again. Heaven forbid that French troops should ever get footing in England. They are very cruel and unscrupulous, whilst our fellows are for the most part tender-hearted; but there are some among ours very bad and heartless too. The sketch of the Circassian is very good; I suppose it is a portrait. I think this success will cheer up the drooping spirits at home. I hope ere very long to tell you of another success. We intend to cut off Circassia entirely. . . . I am fully occupied, blessed with health, and in the best possible position for my rank. . . .”

“‘*Royal Albert*,’ June 14th.—We quitted the Straits of Kertch to-day, and visited the ruins of Anapa, now in the hands of the Circassians, and at noon we left for Sebastopol.”

CHAPTER XX

1855

“‘*Royal Albert*,’ *Kazatch*, June 17th, 1855, 7.30 a.m.—During the night a ship has made the *giro* before the entrance to Sebastopol every half-hour, throwing in a couple of broadsides of shell as she passed. Our launches, in tow of a small steamer, fitted as rocket boats, have also been employed to harass the enemy by throwing their missiles against the ships which have moved towards the north of the harbour. At dawn this morning the besieging batteries opened their fire again on all sides of this devoted fortress; somewhere about 400 guns and heavy mortars are pouring forth their thunders at this moment. All the small vessels and rocket boats are to amuse the enemy again to-night. They are better adapted to this harassing work than the heavy ships, and offer a small mark. Out of nine or ten vessels last night the ‘Snake’ was the only one struck, and she remained until rather late this morning. I fancy the assault will take place to-morrow.”

“*Off Sebastopol*, June 18th, 1855, noon.—We are all in dreadful uncertainty as to whether the assault of this morning has been successful or not. The cannonade and fusillade have been quite awful to behold. We in the fleet have made a demonstration to compel the enemy to keep his sea defences manned, so as to give occupation to the gunners. That part of it was successful enough, because we could see the men in the works and the smoke from all their shot furnaces. The Malakoff is silent, certainly, and I suppose we have posses-

sion. I trust so, for the struggle to get into it has been very great. The ships during last night fired broadsides into the town about every twenty minutes. Poor Lyons, of 'Miranda,' was very severely wounded; a shot or shell carried away the fleshy part of the calf of his left leg. It fortunately has not cut either bone or arteries, but is a very large lacerated wound, which will lay him down for many months. Poor Sir Edmund is very low about it. I have been doing my best to cheer him, but it is very difficult. He was the only person wounded or struck in his ship, though she herself was hit repeatedly.

"4 *p.m.*—I grieve to say the news is very sad. We have been completely repulsed, with a very severe loss in men and officers. Many are the reasons assigned: want of spirit and dash to renew the attack on the moment; mismanagement or want of management in the storming parties, and no one to mount the scaling ladders when the seamen placed them. Altogether it has been a sad affair, but we must look ahead for better things. Colonel Yea, of the 7th, and Sir John Campbell killed; also many, many junior officers. Sir Edmund has ordered 'Miranda' off to Constantinople with the sick and wounded. I have just read the letters to Sir Edmund from headquarters. They are quite cast down about it there. Surely someone there is responsible for the misarrangement or want of arrangement. We must have younger men for this work. I fear there will be a great outcry at home about it."

"June 19th.—The failure of our attack yesterday has thrown a gloom upon us all. You see, whenever a failure of that sort occurs, we are compelled to resort to renewed efforts to recover our lost credit. The reports this morning are not more unfavourable than those of yesterday, inasmuch as some of the supposed killed have turned up, having sheltered themselves until nightfall under the walls of the

works they attacked; but our loss, including that of the French, has been enormous on the whole, very nearly 7000 *hors de combat*. No time must be lost in either working up to it by sap, or bringing such a fire upon it as to crush it before another storm takes place. Do not think about it; very soon it must be ours.

“*About midnight.*—Just as the moon went down a general attack was made, but with what object I know not. It was very beautiful, if one could only separate in idea the appearance and the result; about 40,000 or 50,000 muskets were firing rapidly, guns and mortars were sending forth their deadly missiles, whilst the alarming rocket went roaring through the night. The flights of the shell were very distinctly marked by the burning fuses as they mounted slowly up their abrupt curve, and fell with smothered explosion into earth or masonry. I went to bed completely tired out, as I had scarcely rested for twenty-four hours; but such a rattling and roaring, when once aroused to the fact, banished anything like sleep. How painfully callous one becomes to such terrible work, when constantly in the vicinity of it. There is scarcely one who does not long to get under fire. For my part, I am content to do my duty and go where ordered. I believe I have a due sense of the danger, and am grateful to the Almighty for shielding me in the hour of danger, but when in it I feel more cool than ordinary.”

I here revert again to the pages of the diary.

“*June 21st.*—Almost a cessation of firing on both sides. The Russians are throwing up new works in and about the town.”

“*24th.*—Caradoc carried in a flag of truce. Sardinian steamer with General della Marmora on board reconnoitred. Saluted him with seventeen guns on his visiting the ship.

"French mortar battery very nearly reaches the Russian ships of the line."

"25th.—Admiral received intelligence that his son, Captain Lyons, of the 'Miranda,' who was severely wounded in the night attack of the 18th, is given up by the surgeons. He can only live a few hours. My poor chief!"

"26th.—Received intelligence of the death of poor Captain Lyons last evening."

"28th.—News brought us at 2 a.m. by the steamer 'Danube' of the death of Lord Raglan. Admiral landed and went to headquarters."

The thread of the story is resumed in the extracts from letters.

"*July 4th, 1855.*—I have little to tell you since closing my letter yesterday, beyond that we embarked the corpse of poor Lord Raglan yesterday evening. It was an imposing, interesting, and affecting ceremony. Though I, in common with many, did not look upon him as a general, all admired the many beautiful traits in his character: as an English nobleman and gentleman he was perfect. Never was a man surrounded by a staff more faithful, chivalrous, amiable, and gentlemanly. In the midst of that desperate winter on those heights before us, he preserved the same equanimity and wonderful calmness, when I know he received most unpleasant letters from the Government, who ought better to have aided him. He said one morning to the party assembled at his breakfast table, 'They are fighting and squabbling at home, but we are a happy party in spite of them.' This was uttered at a time when all were more or less enduring privation. A wish was hardly uttered by him before one of those fine young men was in his saddle to carry it out, frequently to move over snow-covered hills at night, with barely defined paths, commonly to pass through a murderous

fire of the enemy, sometimes to come to the sea and bear a message to us in severe weather; under all circumstances perfectly regardless of self, only bent on executing the will or wishes of their commander-in-chief. A like feeling prevailed in the Army generally: there was a great respect and regard exhibited for him, as a high-minded nobleman, whose bearing carried him above everybody else here. Such feelings were entertained for him by our allies. All looked upon him as something superior to themselves, a man to whom, in spite of many military faults, they could not help looking up, and to whose opinion they could not give a deaf ear. He was often counselled by some of his own generals to sacrifice everything to what they considered the safety of the army; to throw policy, morality, the faith and honour of his country even, to the winds to save the Army. Fortunately Sir Edmund stood by him at these critical moments, and the honour of England was saved.

"The scene of yesterday was affecting as well as interesting. At the headquarters of the Army, where the field-marshal died, a great military procession was formed of a portion of each regiment of cavalry, heavy, light, and lances; a troop of horse artillery; a battery of field artillery; fifty men from each regiment of the line; Turkish, French, and Sardinian cavalry and horse artillery. For five miles, that is through the camps down to the Bay of Kazatch, the road along which the procession passed was lined on each side with troops. As it neared the harbour the Marines joined on, as well as giving the guard of honour. On each side of the pier, from the sea to the Marines, the seamen of the fleet, picked men, completed the lines through which the car (consisting of a gun mounted on its carriage, with a frame for the coffin laid lengthwise over the gun) passed, drawn by sixteen horses. The coffin was covered by a Union Jack, on which were placed the hat and sword of the deceased. As soon as it arrived before the guard of Marines, the horses were un-

hooked and the seamen, uncovered, received it, wheeling it to the end of a pier called Victoria Pier, built by the seamen, and here a derrick took it over to the boat, in the presence of a great assemblage of officers of the allies and English, naval and military, and the near friends of the deceased. Our launch with the body, towed by the boats of the two flag-ships, followed by the mourners next to it, and then by the captains two and two in their boats, passed to the 'Caradoc,' through two lines of boats formed by the allied squadrons; minute-guns firing the while from the field battery on shore. In a few minutes the coffin was deposited on the deck of the 'Caradoc,' and she steamed away to England, thus ending a pageant which many would have preferred had never been. One opinion, the prevailing one, would have placed him under a massive block of granite on the hill where so many gallant men lay buried. Generals Péliissier, Simpson, Omar Pasha, and La Marmora, rode beside the bier. Many wept as the boat pulled from the shore; many, I suppose, reflected like myself on the disembarkation at Old Fort on September 14th, and the events that had occurred since that date. A new era dawns upon us; is it a promising one? God grant it; many old and prejudiced men have passed from the scene, some to another world, some to private repose, but many a gallant man has been laid low whose place is not easily filled. I do not believe that in the history of the world the gallantry, heroism, and endurance of the British Army has been equalled. . . .

"What I want more than anything just now is to be a Companion of the Bath. The chief said last night that he treated it quite as a matter of course. *Nous verrons*. I was in hopes that a grant would have been made for Kertch, as little or no prize-money was made—destruction of property being not only politic with allies in order to prevent disputes, but necessary at the time because the number of vessels was too great to be taken charge of by small vessels whose crews

were also small. We are in a state of breathless anxiety (*i.e.*, Sir Edmund, Cleeve, and myself—for it is known to few others) to know the result of one of those acts of daring for which our countrymen are renowned, specially the naval portion of it. Procure at once one of Wyld's maps of the Crimea which takes in the Sea of Azov and all the northern parts of this celebrated peninsula, and you will better understand the explanation I give you. It is worth any sum, if it be only for you to comprehend this one attempt, we will not yet call it achievement. The Crimea is connected to the mainland by the Isthmus of Perekop, along which runs the high road from Odessa. To the south-east of Perekop, on the north-east of the Crimea, are several irregularly-shaped peninsulas running out from the Crimea and the mainland into the Putrid Sea, or Swash, approaching so close as almost to touch, or apparently so, there being perhaps three or four miles between their points. One of these peninsulas, running south from the mainland, is called the Tchongar Peninsula, and the Russians have run a military road along it southwards, and connected its point with the opposite by a wooden bridge. Thence a fine road runs down through Kara su Bazaar to Simferopol, and so on to Sebastopol. By this route the supplies from the whole of the northern shore of the Azov and the Volga are conveyed on countless waggons. You will observe that this road has immense natural protection against the enemy by the long strip of land running from Arabat northwards to Yenitchi, where is a narrow opening, and the land affords great facilities for defence. At this small *embouchure* the enemy has placed batteries and assembled forces, expecting the effort to be made to force it for the purpose of destroying the aforesaid military road; that along the Arabat strip, as well as the floating bridge at Yenitchi, being already under our guns, therefore useless to them. In fact, in my humble opinion, if that road could be broken by any means, we shall not have long to

wait for Sebastopol, for I fancy it would be impossible for Russia to supply her army entirely through Perekop in anything like bad weather, and in fine weather the want of water is the obstacle. Now, how to get at this bridge is the question to be solved. Yenitchi might be forced with loss, but when we are through the enemy would naturally concentrate enormous forces for the defence of the Tchongar bridge. At the same time he does not conceive it possible to be got at except through Yenitchi. A bold heart and a clear head conceived a design, it was that of poor Lyons, but he has bequeathed his legacy to one equally good, if not better, because better fitted for the execution of it. That noble-hearted, gallant fellow Osborn (Sherard Osborn) has cut it, or is a prisoner now. He is in command of the 'Vesuvius' and senior officer in the Azov. His letters on the subject, detailing his plans and the feeling under which he is executing them, should be stereotyped in gold and impressed on every English heart. My blood runs cold with nervous anxiety for him; I feel that I would rather be with him, sharing the danger, than at this distance breathlessly waiting the intelligence. Never were plans better devised—to describe them all would be long; the pith of them is this, that having by precautionary measures cleared the strip or tongue of Arabat of all watching Cossacks, he crossed the tongue at night himself and waded into the Swash to try its depth and seek a channel, which a native pilot he had picked up assured him existed, and that he would take him through. Having proved to his own satisfaction that there was sufficient depth for light boats, he prepared three of the lightest gigs he could procure, provided himself with explosives and combustibles for blowing up and firing the bridge, manned them with volunteers, and was to haul them over the tongue into the Swash on the night of the 4th. He would then have to pull fifteen miles or more, but the pilot, a Moldavian, professes to be perfectly conversant with the channel, says

he knows the road well, and when last on it, not long ago, had to wait seven hours to get over, so great was the crowd of waggons. If Osborn succeeds he ought to be promoted on the spot and made a C.B. His letters of affectionate earnestness to Sir Edmund would delight you. He has left nothing uncared for, even the provision for the family of the pilot, and the exertions to be made on his behalf if he be taken prisoner.* The value of the object to be attained is incalculable, the personal risk enormous, but no great triumph can result to the enemy if they make seizure of three small boats. I know of nothing which has occurred so exciting as this. Osborn has been employed on the Polar expedition, thinks nothing too dangerous to face, trusts implicitly in the protecting hand of God, relies solely upon Him, does not leave a single thing uncared for towards ensuring success, and goes at it. I set him down the moment he came out, as no ordinary character, and called the attention of the admiral to him. He soon found out his worth, and entrusted him with the important duties he is now carrying out. The 'Wrangler' is to bring us the result; she might be here to-morrow. I had a long letter from Wilmot to-day, another fine fellow with the service at heart. Oh that those officers near the top of our list had the energy, the character, the amiability, the intelligence the country so loudly calls for! How differently would our service be conducted! How popular and fascinating it would become; we should recognize a return of old glories. However, I must not run into a grumbling mood. There is no great field for naval operations; what we have to do we do well. . . . My head is full of sanitary arrangements and precautions just now, the necessity for them having been made forcibly apparent by the wind for a few days prevailing from a quarter which impelled the carcasses of dead animals and other nuisances into the harbour of Kazatch, which is crowded with shipping,

* This undertaking, though attempted with the greatest gallantry, failed.

and has on its banks the workshops and storehouses for the fleet. Vessels bringing cattle for the French army come to this port, and many of the animals die and are heedlessly thrown into the sea. To this we have put a stop by establishing a police-boat, and very stringent regulations, imposing heavy fines on the offenders. A steamer is hard at work towing to sea the offensive matter, and many boats are employed on the work of purification. It is no easy matter to execute this work, I assure you, but done it must and shall be effectually. I tell you this that you may be able to stop slanderous tongues if you hear any, as well as to satisfy your own mind that such things are not omitted. The camp is at present healthy, people are well fed, and the work is not severe. The railway will save the lives of thousands; over-fatigue in a burning sun played the mischief last year, added to poor food and bad water. We are also healthy in the fleet, but I fully expect we shall all be tried in this and the next month. However, this is a far more healthy position than that of last year. Desultory firing still goes on; the booming sound of the large mortars is conspicuous above that of the guns. The enemy is much teased by them. We see the great 13-inch shells drop close beside the ships in the harbour frequently, and into Fort Constantine constantly."

CHAPTER XXI

1855

FOR the account of the final bombardment and fall of Sebastopol, I quote from the pages of the diary.

"*July 4th.*—Six gunboats left for the Sea of Azov to join Sherard Osborn in the 'Vesuvius.'"

"*19th.*—'Banshee' arrived with the mails, bringing the announcement of the honours. All captains who have been under fire are to be C.B., myself included, for the 17th October."

"*21st.*—A heavy sortie was made during the first watch, but repelled."

"*22nd.*—Received letter; warm congratulations from my father and Uncle James on my C.B. My dear wife did not know of it till she had posted her letter.

"'STOKE, DEVONPORT,

"'*July 9th, 1855.*

"'MY DEAR WILLIAM,—Just a line of affectionate congratulation upon your being made a C.B., as this moment announced to us by Melita, who received it yesterday from Ommanney, but, it seems, closed her letter to you before she observed it; but this morning, looking over the letter to see that all was right, it caught her eye, and quitting her breakfast, she ran over to tell us of it. It did not, however, at all surprise me, for I knew it could be only a question of time, already much too long delayed, and many a gallant spirit has, since it was earned, taken its departure, to whom it would have proved a comfort if bestowed in time, as it ought to have been. Let us, my dear William, be thankful that you are amongst the spared, and God grant that you may continue to be so. I think

you are mistaken in thinking that H. Hillyar would be amongst the number of those so distinguished, as, he being a commander at the time, promotion was his reward, and the rule since the battle of Navarino has been not to confer both. How much and deeply we have all felt for poor Sir Edmund upon losing his gallant son; we devoutly hope he may be supported under so sad a bereavement; I was only waiting to hear from you to write him a few lines of condolence. Say all you can for me to him upon so melancholy a subject. I do not yet know what honour may be conferred upon him, but certainly nothing less than a peerage would be worth his acceptance, and that must come at farthest when Sebastopol falls. Before I conclude I must bear testimony to the welfare of all your immediate belongings, and only wish you could see them, they are all so well and joyous, Miss Constance, though least, not last in that respect. Your dear mother sends you a mother's love and congratulation, your uncles all contribute their proportion, and you may be sure that your aunt and sisters would not be backward if present; but the latter are upon their visit at Taunton, and much benefited by the change. May God bless you, my dear William, and

“Believe me,

“Your sincerely affectionate father,

“W. B. MENDES.”

“Very heavy firing from 9 till 10 p.m. and at midnight, more heavy at midnight than I can recollect it.”

“*August 4th.*—Moved in off the harbour's mouth, but anchored a little too close, so shifted out again at 2 p.m. We shall not have to wait much longer for this town now, I fancy. Admiral away at headquarters.

“Went to general quarters and target practice from main-deck. Firing very good. Ship improving fast.”

“*9th.*—The Duke of Newcastle on board. French mortar vessels threw some shell very nicely into the Quarantine fort.”

“*13th.*—French work at the west point of Quarantine called the ‘Napoleon Battery’ is progressing fast; when complete it will be a valuable aid.”

"16th.—Russians advanced in great force on the Tchernaiia, attacking the position held by the French and Sardinians. The battle commenced at 3.30 a.m., and ended at 10 a.m. in the total defeat of the Russians, leaving in the hands of the victors 2200 prisoners, including thirty-four officers. They left also some 1500 dead on the field. One battery of 32-pounder howitzers was the only British arm engaged in this fight, though we had 4000 cavalry with horse artillery drawn up in readiness. The French have lost about 1000 *hors de combat*, the Sardinians about 300.

"Several Russian staff-officers were killed. General Read, who commanded the first division of their attacking force, was also killed; his body fell into the hands of the French, and on his person was found the whole plan of operations. The Russian force seemed utterly demoralized, and on their retreat Prince Gortschakoff ordered the batteries to fire upon them. The victory is considered a brilliant and most important one for us."

"17th.—Batteries opened a heavy fire on the Russian works to enable the sappers to sap up."

"19th.—Heavy firing almost continuous now."

"31st.—Have spent the day with the Naval Brigade."

"September 1st.—Visited the 'Ouvrages Blancs' and the batteries of the English left attack. This place must soon be ours."

"3rd.—Visited the French look-out called the 'Maison d'Eau.' Dined with Hillyar."

"5th.—Heavy bombardment going on. A Russian frigate burning in the harbour.

"6th.—Bombardment continues; firing very heavy and incessant."

"7th.—Bombardment continues. Another frigate burnt in the harbour."

“Have received instructions for the assault as follows:—

“1st.—As soon as our troops shall have effected a lodgment in the Malakoff the French flag will be hoisted there.

“2nd.—The Queen’s flag (the English white ensign) hoisted at the Brancion Redoubt, and repeated at the Lancaster Battery, will indicate that the English attack ought to begin at Great Redan.

“3rd.—Rockets thrown from the Lancaster Battery repeated first in the rear of the English batteries at an intermediate spot, and then at the French observatory, will indicate that the attack on the central bastion is about to commence.

“4th.—Should it be necessary to spread the troops on the side of the Quarantine, the French flag will be first hoisted at the observatory of General Paté, and then repeated on the tumulus in Peschiana Bay.

“5th.—The mortar boats placed in the Bay of Strelitzka will open fire precisely at noon. The steam mortar boats will get under weigh, and will take up the position assigned to them to open fire the moment they reach their point.

“The squadrons will get their steam up also at noon, ready to act according to the signals that shall be made to them.”

“6th.—There will be in Strelitzka two steamers that shall enter the bay this night, one English and the other French, with two English boats, whose duty it will be to carry to the squadrons the despatches of the generals-in-chief.

“7th.—From noon to half-past twelve one half of the mortar boats will fire on the bastion of the Quarantine; the other half will fire on Fort Alexander and on the sea batteries of the Quarantine.

“At half-past twelve all the mortar boats will concentrate their fire on Fort Alexander and on the sea batteries of Quarantine. This very day these mortar boats will take up their position, plant their poles, and will fire at intervals forty rounds each on the bastion of the Quarantine.

“8th.—The steam mortar boats will fire to-morrow on Fort Nicholas and on the extreme end of Artillery Creek.

“9th.—The action of the ships will necessarily be controlled by the weather.”

“September 8th.—General assault made on the works of Sebastopol by the allies according to the preceding plan. The Malakoff was carried by the French about half-past twelve.

"The English got into the Redan, but were driven back by an overwhelming force. The French and Sardinians were repulsed twice at the central bastion.

"It is uncertain about the Little Redan.

"The attack on the Malakoff was so sudden and so quickly executed that the Russians were taken by surprise and rushed out of their works, which they could not retake. They fought desperately at all points. Our supposed loss *hors de combat* is 2000."

"9th.—Heavy explosions have taken place in the direction of Sebastopol during the night. At daylight, observed the enemy evacuating the town and forts on the south side, leaving fires burning in many parts, which soon spread into a general conflagration. Great explosions have taken place all to-day in the works and different parts of the town. The fleet had been sunk during the night, except the steamers. Signal made from headquarters, 'South side completely cleared.'

"Observed the troops entering at all points during the day. Many accidents have occurred from explosions. The allied fleets formed a cordon from the Belbec to Strelitzka at four cables distance, with steamers ready outside and a line of boats inside to intercept the Russian steamers if they attempted to escape."

"10th.—Allies in entire possession of the south side; an armistice granted by the allies for the purpose of removing the wounded and burying the dead."

"11th.—A fresh north-western gale blowing, commencing at west; we drove about four cables' length, so let go the small bower.

"A few shot fired at the steamers."

"12th.—At 3.30 a.m. the Russian steamers that had assembled inside Fort Constantine were observed to be on fire; all were destroyed by seven o'clock.

"Unmoored, weighed, and moved out under steam. From appearances we are led to conclude that the Russian army is evacuating the north as well as the south side.

"Great movements of material, camp equipage, and troops to the northward.

"The rains of the last two or three days are against them. My belief is that Russia will evacuate the Crimea altogether. Of what value is it to her without Sebastopol or Kertch? The allies must hold it as a material guarantee."

"13th.—Rode to headquarters: visited the Malakoff, Sebastopol, the dockyard, docks, Fort Nicholas, and the Great Redan. Working parties from our army were employed burying about 1000 dead bodies found in the store-houses of the dockyard: wounded men and dead bodies were found in the cellars in all parts of the town and works, numbering about 2000. Numbers without limbs and with desperate wounds had not been attended to. The works for the defence are truly wonderful, the underground chambers and galleries beneath the batteries most cleverly contrived and skilfully constructed. Scarcely a portion of the town or works has escaped the shot and shell from the attack. The streets are cut and ploughed up like vineyards or furrowed fields. The docks have not escaped; they are fine works, beautifully constructed.

"Truly they have made a most gallant defence."

"17th.—Walked with Hay, of the 'Hannibal,' over the town, then to the central bastion, Bastion du Mat, cemetery, and Forts Napoleon and Genoa. Thank God, it is all ours at last! Where can we strike them next?"

"21st.—Weighed from before Sebastopol accompanied by steam fleet, and proceeded off Balaklava. Rendezvous for the night 10' S.S.W. of Khersonese light."

"22nd.—Proceeded to Eupatoria to endeavour to lead the Russians to suppose that we were taking a large force there.

Landed to visit a portion of the works ; much pleased with the lines of defence."

"23rd.—Left Eupatoria for Kazatch at 11.30 a.m. ; passed close along the shore to enable the Duke of Newcastle to get a good view of Old Fort, where the expedition first landed, the Alma, etc. Anchored at 6 p.m."

"30th.—Rode to the monastery with Cleeve. French cavalry attacked the Russian force outside Eupatoria with success ; captured six out of eight guns, many horses, prisoners, waggons, camels, etc. General d'Allonville commanded. 'Gladiator' brought up the intelligence."

"October 1st.—An expedition preparing and making arrangements for the embarkation of troops."

"4th.—Took on board the 17th Regiment. The 31st, 57th, 63rd, and 20th embarked in the three ships of the line."

"6th.—'Rodney' left for England ; exchanged cheers on passing."

"7th.—Left Kazatch for Odessa, thirty-five English, thirty French sail ; 1500 British, 4000 French."

"8th.—Anchored off Odessa at 5.30 p.m."

"10th.—Most unfavourable weather for the expedition, which is much delayed by it. Most vexatious, as despatch is very necessary. There has been much consultation on the part of the admirals to-day with the marine surveyor. I gather that he can promise us thirty-five feet, quite enough, if we can get anywhere near the place [Kinburn] with that !"

I am now enabled to insert extracts from letters which will give an account of the expedition which resulted in the capture of Kinburn :—

"*'Royal Albert,' off Odessa, October 12th, 1855.*—I have been labouring hard at the arrangements, and here we go. I have confidence in every captain in the fleet ; they are

full of zeal and ability, and, I am certain, will do well. The admirals have just been debating, and have decided to postpone the expedition until the weather is more settled. It is certainly prudent, but is vexatious when all is ready. The old 'Agamemnon' came up last evening, and the 'Sphynx' was seen at anchor when the fog lifted. I was quite rejoiced to see them both. I was sadly afraid that poor Wilmot would have been too late to share in the attack. Hillyar, in the 'Gladiator,' has been given a position of honour; he is under Sir Houston Stewart's orders, whose flag will be in the 'Valorous,' to force the entrance, pass the forts, and, in company with the small gunboats, capture the enemy's vessels [that may be] attempting either to succour or carry off the garrison."

"13th, 9 a.m.—Still at anchor off Odessa, delayed by a southerly swell which would prevent the landing at the point selected. . . . The *Times* is greatly wroth at our inactivity; the inaction is not so marvellous, but the appointment of old women to command is the marvel. England looks on whilst her honour is fading without making one decided step to save it. What a wretched state of anxiety all the Odessa people must be in whilst this vast force is lying before the place! I can fancy nothing so demoralizing. Imagine it before Brighton!"

"14th, 7 a.m.—We are off at last for Kinburn. A fine morning, glass high, and all looking propitious. It is, or will be, shoal water for such a ship; we shall have to navigate in about five and a half fathoms, or thirty-three feet, quite little enough for a ship drawing twenty-eight feet nearly."

"October 15th, 5 a.m.—The small steamers and boats are alongside receiving the troops; a babel of tongues exists on the deck, Irish voices predominating. The ships are told off to engage the batteries, which do not look very formidable, nevertheless earthworks are deceiving. I fear we shall not be

able to get close enough in the 'Royal Albert' to do much service. We are now in thirty-two feet at three miles distance. The run up yesterday was exciting and interesting. Guns and musketry have been firing on the boats sounding through the night, but I fancy without much effect."

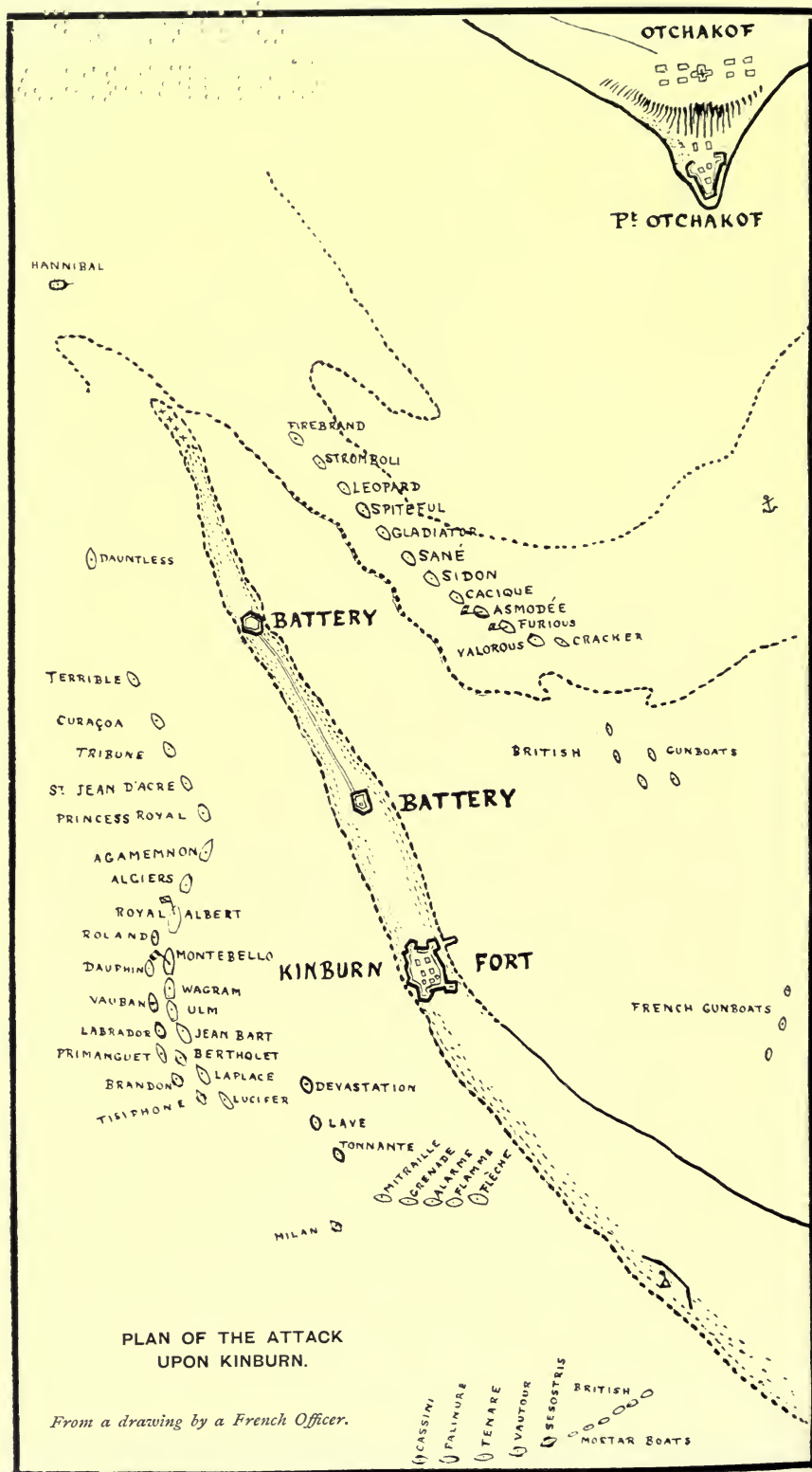
"16th, 5 *a.m.*—The day wore on yesterday without our making a general attack. The troops effected a successful landing unopposed. The garrison seemed surprised by it. All mounted men made the best of their way from the fort and neighbourhood to the country; the inhabitants quitted the village. At about two o'clock the mortar boats got into position and opened fire, throwing many heavy shell directly into the fort, upon which they [the enemy] set fire to the village, which made a great blaze and still shows lighted cinders. It was decided to move in the floating batteries early this morning, and that the ships should engage at noon to-day, weather permitting. A Polish Jew was captured by the troops, trying to get away. He tells us that the strength of the garrison is 1200 in all; that they have sixty guns in all and none for the casemates, which are now masked; that they are much disheartened and have no good water, though they have provisions for a month. I fancy they are under an idea that, from the ships having anchored so far off, they cannot approach closer; their spirits will not rise when they see this great force approach. The night before last the small steam gunboats were ordered to run round the spit to take the fort in reverse. They advanced together, but the French not finding exactly placed some beacon that the master of the 'Valorous' was ordered to lay down, and not liking the fire of the enemy, made a hasty retreat; our young fellows, four in number, dashed on safely, and the French admiral ordered his to follow before break of day, which they did. The master of the 'Spitfire'* (one of them) was in the 'Cracker'; he took soundings inside, and when satisfied ran the

* Commander T. A. Spratt.

gauntlet of the batteries back again at about ten in the forenoon. It was a pretty sight to see the little thing running through such a fire. Wilmot was under weigh in the 'Sphynx,' and, like a good fellow, dashed after her to engage the forts. The whole thing formed a pretty picture. They struck Wilmot ('Sphynx,' I mean), but not the gunboat. A good officer commands the fort; therefore he will not yield until compelled. Our Union Jack was planted from our boats on the shore at half-past eight yesterday, two hours nearly before the French flag. I wish this little affair were over; it is late in the year for heavy ships to be in such narrow and shoal waters. . . .

"4 *p.m.*—No fight to-day. The small fry on the opposite side the spit are amusing themselves and us by throwing in an occasional shot and shell to disturb the equanimity of the garrison. We of the great family simply look on. The swell is considerable, therefore much against operations. The garrison evidently fancies we in the large ships cannot approach within tolerable range, as all the little additions they are making are with a view to another direction. Imagine the fire of this enormous force concentrated upon so small a space at easy range. It is scarcely presumptuous to pity the defenders for supposing they can long resist us. . . ."

"*October 17th.*—This day year we tried our best in the old 'Agamemnon' to knock down Fort Constantine; to-day everything bids fair for the attack on the forts here; the wind is off the land, water smooth, and I trust an end will be put to the suspense. The troops have found plenty of water, I am happy to say, and to-day we shall have no difficulty in putting provisions on shore, I hope. Yesterday the surf was too heavy for anything. Ten thousand good troops occupy the peninsula; they have cut a double trench across it, so that nothing can molest them; they are equal to 50,000 men in the position they now hold. A prisoner was taken



by the French yesterday who reports that many men were wounded by the shell firing the day before, and that their magazine was much injured. All the preparations we see them making are against an attack by land; they seem to have got an idea that the ships cannot get closer than they are now. Spratt has found places for us all, varying from 900 to 1200 yards. I hope to see the fort a ruin and the guns dismounted in less than an hour. I find there are in all sixteen mortars of thirteen inch to play upon the place, and about 500 guns. . . ."

"18th, 7 a.m.—A bloodless victory on the side of the allies was the result of yesterday's attack. . . . The French floating batteries, English and French mortar vessels and gunboats took up positions and opened fire upon Fort Kinburn at ten o'clock with very great effect. At noon precisely the allied fleets weighed and advanced to the general attack of all the works, in review order five abreast, one of the prettiest sights ever witnessed by seafaring men, perhaps by any man. As we moved forward we commenced engaging with our long pivot guns. Steamers unavoidably a little faster than the French, we were in position a trifle sooner than they were, sprang our broadsides, and opened fire along the whole line. A steam flotilla under the rear-admirals, French and English, led by Sir H. Stewart, forced the passage and passed into the Dnieper, by which movement all the batteries were taken in reverse. The enemy commenced briskly, but in five minutes every gun in Fort Kinburn was dismounted and the embrasures of the earth-works filled in, so that they entirely ceased firing; but as no demonstration was made (not that I see how they could make it, for the flagstaff was cut down instantly, the colours having been shot away previously by a gunboat), the firing was kept up for a quarter of an hour, crumbling the poor place and burying the garrison. I besought the admiral to cease; at last he consented, and made the signal to that

effect. Flags of truce were sent in, with terms of unconditional surrender, the officers being permitted to retain their swords. They demurred a little; some of the bolder spirits said they preferred blowing themselves up, but the troops thought differently, for whilst the parley was going on they were getting out at all points to yield themselves up. It was soon settled, however, and two generals, many officers, and 1300 soldiers fell into our hands, with seventy-five guns and many mortars. Flour, fuel, and forage in abundance for our troops for the winter!

"5 *p.m.*—I left you this morning for breakfast. As soon as it was over we captains accompanied the admiral to the camp, inspected the Russian prisoners, then visited the fort or heap of ruins (for it is almost a shapeless mass), and finally the earthworks on the spit. So complete was the ruin that it is easy to walk in and out at the breaches. Not a gun is left uninjured. Had the firing continued for an hour, the garrison must have been buried in the *débris*. The French floating batteries* are perfect; the shot struck against them in many places, but simply indented the iron a trifle, and shell broke against them like glass. It has been a good experiment; now Cronstadt and Sveaborg are doomed; nothing can save them. If they are not destroyed before this time next year, it will be a disgrace to us. Two Frenchmen were killed on board one of them by a shot entering at the port. Those were the only casualties sustained. This is the way to make war; destroy your enemy, and save your men. To make the matter more complete, at daybreak this morning the Russians blew up the fortress and neighbouring batteries, and burnt all the barracks at the opposite point of Otchakoff. We thus have undisputed possession of both sides of the entrance to the Dnieper. The Crimea must be

* These were ironclad floating batteries, and I believe this to be the first occasion on which regular ironclads went into action.

ours next spring, if Russia does not quit it before, which I think she will do."

"19th, 7 a.m.—A flight of gunboats ought to have started up the Dnieper yesterday to feel the way and threaten Nicholaef and Kherson. It is an enigma to me that it has not been done. I suppose allied operations are ever bad—one cannot move without the other. The Russians are panic-stricken now, and yet here, as elsewhere, they are allowed to recover themselves. The prisoners embark this morning. Some are athletic, sulky-looking fellows; many are heavy and dull; very many are mere youths, quite rejoiced at their escape. The night before last a deserter came over from Otchakoff in a small boat alone; they fired a great deal at him, and struck his boat, but not himself. He was in charge of the magazines at the point; says he is a Pole, though he looks as like a Russian as I ever saw one; that he does not like service in the Russian army, but wishes to enter the French, where he may meet with some men who speak his native tongue."

CHAPTER XXII

1855-1857

AFTER the conclusion of the Kinburn expedition, as recorded in my father's letters in the last chapter, the "Royal Albert" returned with the other ships to Kazatch, where she anchored on the evening of November 2nd.

In due course the troops of the expedition were disembarked, the Marines being sent to England, and on November 14th the ship moved into the harbour of Kazatch and moored securely for the winter. Then began the gradual return of ships and men, the war being practically at an end as far as active operations in the Black Sea were concerned.

On December 9th my father received the sad news of the death of his friend Admiral Bruat, who died at sea off Cape Matapan, when on his way back to France, after a very short illness. As the reader will have gathered from the previous letters, a considerable degree of friendship had sprung up between the two men; they had been much thrown together by the circumstances of the war, and it was with feelings of real sorrow that my father attended the funeral ceremony in his memory, on board the "Napoleon," on December 10th.

On the 13th he received the unexpected information from Sir Edmund that the ship was to go down to Malta immediately, and preparations for sea were commenced at once, and on the 20th of the month she unmoored and quitted Kazatch, a good deal of difficulty being experienced in "catting" the anchors, owing to ice round the falls and blocks. She anchored in the Bosphorus two days later, near the Sultan's Valley, and on the following day Sir Edmund Lyons transferred his flag to the "Caradoc," and, accompanied by his secretary, Mr. Cleeve, and General La Marmora, left for Malta and Marseilles, *en route* for Paris and London.

The command of the fleet now devolved upon Admiral Sir

Houston Stewart, who delayed the ship a little in order that Mrs. Grey (the wife of Admiral Grey), who had been very ill, might go down to Malta as a passenger in her. Admiral the Honourable F. W. Grey, whom the reader will remember as my father's old captain in the "Actæon," was at this time conducting all the naval and transport duties at Constantinople. He had a large staff at his disposal, and a building on shore for officers, etc., whilst his flag was flying in the "Queen" (120). On the 24th the "Royal Albert" therefore moved from the Sultan's Valley to Constantinople and anchored near the "Queen," and on the 26th, having embarked Admiral and Mrs. Grey, she left for Malta.

The voyage, however, was destined to be not without adventure, for soon after passing out of the Dardanelles a dangerous leak developed in the stern gland,* which assumed such alarming proportions, just as she was entering the Doro Passage, that it became necessary to beach the ship immediately at the nearest available place, to save her from sinking.

As this incident called for the display of the highest qualities of seamanship and the greatest readiness of resource on the part of my father, I give his own account of it, leaving the reader to judge of the difficult and dangerous nature of the feat performed.

"I was on my way to Malta from Constantinople, having left the latter port on the 26th December. Running across the Sea of Marmora under easy steam, I noticed a jarring sound abaft as the shaft revolved; the chief engineer said it was of no moment, and that, if permitted to accelerate the engines, it would disappear. I gave the permission, and the prediction was realized; but on again going slow the jarring recommenced, with occasionally a thump sufficient to shake the after-body of the ship. After passing out of the Dardanelles the engines were stopped to screw up the stern gland. At the end of a few hours the chief engineer represented that a good deal of water was coming in through

* For the benefit of non-nautical readers, it may be stated that the stern gland, or "stuffing-box," is where the screw-shaft passes out through the ship's stern, and is an arrangement which, while it admits of the rotation of the shaft, prevents the water from entering.

the gland, and he again asked permission to stop to tighten it up, which I granted ; but in trying to screw it up he failed to arrest the water. I examined it with him, and instantly saw that there was something radically wrong ; in fact, that the gland and stuffing-box were insecure. The engines worked more smoothly, the jarring noise had subsided, but after a time metal in dust began to come in with the water ; and at length the gland came bodily in along the shaft, followed by a rush of water which compelled injection from the bilge instead of from the sea, in order to keep the leak under. Even so it became necessary to work the chain pumps also occasionally. About 1 a.m. on the 28th I was approaching the Doro Channel under steam and sail ; I felt the position and circumstances were critical in the extreme, for if anything rendered it necessary to stop the engines, I should be unable to keep the ship afloat. I decided therefore in my own mind to place the ship on a beach if I could find one near and suitable. Gardia Bay presented itself, but it was exposed to south winds, and might possibly entail the loss of the ship ; Athens was some distance away, and would be full of ships, making it difficult to lay the ship quietly on the beach without injury to herself or to others ; Port Nicolo* was close at hand, if large enough. I studied the chart, and, in consultation with Mr. Wheeler, the master, who had visited it in his youth, I came to the conclusion it would do. I accordingly decided to steam round in circles off the port until daylight. After stowing the hammocks,† I assembled everybody on deck, pointed out the position, stated my intentions, and closed a short address by saying that I had little doubt of saving the lives of all, but that I expected the utmost exertions of each one to enable me to save the ship—an appeal which was nobly responded to. At daylight I steered for the harbour ; the

* In the island of Zea.

† The "Royal Albert" had over 1100 people on board her at this time.



THE "ROYAL ALBERT" BEACHED.

From a water-colour drawing by one of the Officers.

moment I entered I saw it was exactly suited to my purpose, and I fixed upon the little bay in which you see the ship as the one on which I would place her, because with my glass I saw rushes growing at the head of it—a sure sign of a soft, muddy bottom. I elected on the instant to make a running moor, so dropping my anchors that I could easily steam on to the beach if I failed to keep the water under whilst I was performing the operation. After the second or best bower anchor had been let go, I ordered the engines to be reversed and hove in upon the small bower cable with this object. I directed the engineer to work the engines now ahead and now astern, so as to get rid of the water by injection, but it gained so rapidly upon him in the process that he hailed up the tube that the fires would be extinguished in a few minutes if I did not allow him to go on ahead. Upon this I gave the order to go ahead at speed, to pay out both cables, and to steer direct for the little beach. The ship took the ground so smoothly that it was imperceptible when she touched and finally stopped. I then found that with the bowsprit over the beach I had eleven feet of water under each bumpkin, and six fathoms under the stern. I ordered the engines to be kept going at a sufficient pace to keep the water out of the ship, the estimated area of the aperture round the tube open to the sea being equal to a round hole six inches in diameter fourteen feet below the water-line. The next thing was to secure the ship to the shore to prevent her being blown off the beach if a northerly gale came on; to this end I carried the hemp sheet cable to the shore ahead and secured it well to the rocks. I took the hemp stream from the port quarter also to the shore and secured it to the rocks; all boats were hoisted out, the topmasts housed, and the yards pointed. Runner blocks were secured to the fore and main mastheads round the eyes of the lower rigging, corresponding blocks being taken to the shore abreast of each mast and well secured there; hawsers were then rove through the masthead and

shore blocks, and steadied taut to prevent the ship inclining to starboard. The lower deck ports were caulked in ; some of the after-guns on all decks were run forward to give the fore-body of the ship a good hold on the beach ; bread and other dry provisions were got up from the after-holds on to the main deck ; a signal officer and man were landed to watch for passing vessels ; a British steam transport in the offing was brought to by signal, and in her I despatched Lieutenant Tryon* with letters to the senior officer of H.M. ships at the Piræus.

“ Everything having been done to ensure the safety of H.M. ship, I directed the ordinary routine to be carried on. The engineers were trying all they could think of to arrest the water, but with no success. Having been up about forty-eight hours, I retired to my cabin, and whilst lying upon my cot, in my clothes, I began to reflect on the ways and means for extricating the ship from the difficulty, as nothing could be applied either on the outside or inside round a revolving shaft. Suddenly it struck me that if I could get a block of elm bolted through to the keelson, about four to five feet forward of the seating of the inner gland, with a bearing cut out equal to the semi-diameter of the shaft, and two large holes in it through which the water could pass without rising over the upper edge of the block, a box could then be built round the leak, sufficiently strong and well secured to hold the water when the holes were plugged. Accordingly, about 1 a.m. on the 29th—Mr. Sargent, the carpenter, having been ill with fever and only just convalescent—I sent for the carpenter’s mate, William Davidson, a north countryman, who had served some years in the shipbuilding yard of Messrs. Green, of Blackwall, and to him I explained my plan. After a moment or two, and a scratch of the head, he said, ‘ Yes, sir, it can be done.’ On receiving this answer I

* Afterwards Admiral Sir George Tryon, K.C.B., who perished in the “ Victoria.”

jumped up and sent for the carpenter, to whom I also represented the idea. The good old man started with delight as he answered, 'Yes, sir, it can be done, and we have the wood in the ship.' Not an instant was lost. The elm was got up, and moulds were made, engineers and shipwrights working heartily together. Late in the afternoon of the 29th I had the satisfaction of seeing the block secured in place, and, what was equally to the purpose, that the water passed through the holes without rising above the block itself. The box was now proceeded with, enclosing the aperture. Late on the 30th it was completed, the plugs driven in in my presence, and the leak arrested, but only temporarily. The pressure of water within was so great that it found its way through the seams of the bottom of the box, or lining of the ship, and so by various ways to the engine-room, but not in such quantity as before. The plugs were drawn, the engines again set on, a manhole was cut, and efforts made to caulk the seams. Puddling with tallow and loose oakum was also tried, but this was not very effectual. On the morning of January 1st, 1856, the box was again closed, with better results, but still not quite satisfactory. During the past twenty-four hours H.M. ships 'Princess Royal,' Captain L. T. Jones, C.B., and 'Sphynx,' P. sloop, Captain A. P. E. Wilmot, C.B., arrived from the Piræus, and sent on board one or two skilled shipwrights to assist my men. I had the box again opened, first to line with lead, then with sheets of copper, and late in the afternoon it was finally closed and plugged with entire success.

"Wishing to give it a full trial at rest, I decided to hold fast everything until daylight of the 2nd, when, finding it satisfactory, the screw was lifted, all shore-fasts were cast off provisions, guns, etc., restored to their places, topmasts fiddled, topgallant masts and yards crossed, and the stream hemp run out astern to the hawser of the 'Princess Royal.' About ten o'clock, a breeze coming down from the north, the sails were loosed, mainsail dropped, and maintopsail hoisted.

Whilst these operations were going forward I went below to watch the box, and they were just beginning to tauten the stream cable when a cheer on deck announced the ship afloat, and by the time I reached the deck she was just reconciling herself between the bowers. Sails were furled, boats hoisted in and up, ship unmoored, and, in tow of the 'Sphynx,' we left the port for Malta, convoyed by the 'Princess Royal.' Soon after noon, the breeze being steady, the tow was cast off, and all sail made. On reaching Malta, and the ship being placed in dock, it was found that a little mud still remained on the forefoot, but not a scratch on her copper. Thus was a fine ship preserved to Her Majesty, and I recommend the little bay to anyone who may find himself in a like predicament in that part of the world." *

The "Royal Albert" arrived at Malta on January 7th, 1856, after her perilous experience, and on the following day my father left her for England on a few weeks' leave, my mother being seriously ill. On February 24th, however, he rejoined her at Malta, and found the artificers still hard at work repairing defects, etc.

He was much interested at this time in a troopboat that he had designed. He had spent much time and energy throughout the war in planning and perfecting this special class of boat, to be carried by troopships for the purpose of landing artillery and cavalry on an open beach. His experiences in the Crimea had forcibly brought home to him the importance of greater attention being given to this subject, so that in future wars we should show a certain amount of preparedness and organization, and not waste time in constructing elaborate makeshifts, as we had to do at Varna. Perhaps I may say here that he afterwards invented and brought to perfection an artillery raft for this purpose. It consisted in principle of a series of steel cylinders, or caissons, with a superimposed deck for guns or horses. Two or more caissons could be used, and the raft thus varied in

* For this service my father received the thanks of the Admiralty.

There is an excellent model of the stern of the ship, showing the "cofferdam," in the museum of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.

size. The raft was carried by the Indian troopships* in after years, and I daresay some of my readers will remember the iron cylinders which were a conspicuous object on the spar-decks of those well-known ships.

There was a model of this raft shown in the Museum of the United Service Institution for many years; but, alas! model, rafts, and indeed Indian troopships too, are now relegated to the limbo of things that have been, and when the necessity again arises for landing an army on an open beach, we shall doubtless commence at the beginning again, with makeshifts, just as we had to do before.†

The following letter from my father to Sir Edmund Lyons, written on February 26th (just after his return to the ship), is of interest here, as it shows that he was completely free from that jealousy of rivals so common amongst inventors, and that he was quite ready to adopt what was best for the service, whether it happened to be his or not:—

“H.M.S. ‘ROYAL ALBERT,’ MALTA,

“February 26th, 1856.

“MY DEAR SIR EDMUND,—I arrived here by the French steamer the day before yesterday. I find the ship at her moorings in the Great Harbour. She was taken out of dock for the second time on the 9th inst., but a leak remained in the stern gland. Much time was lost in trying to discover and stop it from the inside, but it was found necessary to re-dock her on the 15th, when the defect was found and remedied, and she came out again on the 16th. This operation has thrown things back a good deal, but I think it due to Commander Marten to say that he seems to have done all that was possible to forward the ship's equipment. All the weights, coals, water, and provisions were taken in between the 17th and 23rd inclusive, on which latter date the ship's company were turned over from the ‘Hibernia’ to their ship.

“The amount of work at the yard has been so great that they have been unable to pay attention to the general defects in the ship, some of which are important; the decks and waterways inside have

* See Appendix XV.

† Two of these rafts, belonging to H.M. Indian troopships “Euphrates” and “Malabar,” did good service at Ismailia, during the Egyptian War of 1882. Upwards of 1000 horses were landed by the one, and the other provided the additional means for the daily transport, by the Sweet Water Canal, of 65 tons of provisions and forage for the army, at the part which the railway and boats could not accomplish.

been caulked, but the outside is not yet finished, nor will be for two or three days. All the pumps between decks, needing much repair, are in hand. The shipwrights from the yard are replacing the orlop-deck beam, which was cut away to enable the shaft to come up, and the after-magazine, which was also removed, is still down, but everything is going forward as quickly as is possible where the demand for labour is so much in excess of the supply. The troopboats are in a very forward state. Those on Mr. Ladd's plan are excellent; mine seem very heavy, though he assures me that he could not put less materials in them. If I could possibly combine lightness with my plan, I prefer it; but as it is, I think Mr. Ladd's are the best, though some of the practical men have a fancy for mine because it is thought they will be more generally useful on expeditions, particularly in a surf. I like Mr. Ladd's horseboat very much, and am sure it will answer. The engineers assure me that all connected with our screw and shafting is as perfect as it is possible to be, and so it appears to be."

He was in frequent correspondence with Sir Edmund Lyons, who was in England during this period, the letters being not only about matters connected with the ship and the fleet, but about public affairs in general.

I give the following as being typical of many others:—

"*Private.*

"NORFOLK HOUSE, ST. JAMES' SQUARE,

"April 14th, 1856.

"MY DEAR MENDES,—Your letters are full of matters most interesting to me, and I am much obliged to you for them; and I am at the same time thoroughly satisfied with all you have done and are doing, and, above all, I am glad that your mind is more at ease about your wife. So far so good, but I am sorry for the annoyance you have had in consequence of the bad conduct of the youngsters, notwithstanding all the excellent precautions you took. In a former letter I told you that I wished Admiral Stewart to put — into the 'Furious' or 'Odin,' and that I should want the other delinquents to be disrated in pencil, so that you may forgive them hereafter if they should deserve it.

"I believe I told you that I had succeeded in obtaining the Sebastopol clasp for all the ships that co-operated with the Army, and the Azov clasp for all the ships employed there, as well as for the officers, seamen, and marines sent up from the fleet to assist in the operations.

"I have a serious task in selecting persons entitled to the Victoria Cross. In the 'Agamemnon' I remember only Coles, Ball (of

‘Circassia’), and the two men who put the fire out in the main yard. If you know of any others tell me of them by the first post, as your letter may possibly find me still in England. Tell me, too, the names of the two men, for Mr. Baring may have mislaid your note. I wish you also to let it be generally known that I wish all captains and commanders to send me the names of persons who they consider have established claims under their command. Tell me of any cases you happen to recollect in the fleet. . . .

“I have not made my mind up as to your coming to meet me in the ‘Royal Albert.’

“Believe me,

“Yours sincerely,

“E. LYONS.”

With the exception of a few short cruises for sail-drill, target-practice, etc., the ship remained at Malta till June 15th. During this time many old friends passed through on their way to England from the Crimea.

On May 22nd the thanks of the Admiralty for the services rendered by the Navy during the war were read to the men, and on the 29th the thanks of the Houses of Parliament in the same way.

On June 12th his old ship, the “Agamemnon,” passed through on her way to England, having on board the Coldstream Guards. On the 15th he received orders to proceed to the Black Sea, and left Malta at 7 p.m., and after a day spent in the Bosphorus went straight on to the Crimea, and anchored once more at Kazatch on June 22nd. During the next few days he visited Sebastopol, and went over once again the scene of the tremendous struggle—the Malakoff, the Redan, the Tchernaiia, the ruins of Inkermann, and the camp. One can well imagine with what mingled feelings he visited the latter, so recently teeming with life and movement, now so still.

On Wednesday, July 2nd, there is the following entry in his diary:—

“To-day I rode to Cathcart’s Hill and through the deserted camp, which has for me a terribly dreary and desolate appearance. The broken huts are surrounded by the *débris* of preserved meat tins and utensils of various descriptions, whilst everywhere the carcasses of dead rats abound. Russian

soldiers were stealthily prowling about amongst the ruins of an encampment but lately full of life.

"I rode on to the cemetery on Cathcart's Hill, where so many gallant fellows lie buried. Alas! what a price have we paid for our triumph! Much care has been bestowed upon it, and an appearance is afforded to the visitor which reflects credit on our dear old country. When I thought of the many friends whom a short time before I had seen land on this celebrated territory in full health, strength, and energy, and equal to any emergency, who were now sleeping their last sleep on this spot, I could scarcely restrain my tears.

"On my way back I called at headquarters, where I lunched with Sir W. Codrington, just as he was about to take leave of the place. Curzon, who had landed with poor Lord Raglan (whom none could help admiring), showed me into the room in which he died, where a small tablet had been let into the wall, with a simple inscription stating the fact upon it. A slab has also been placed in the garden under the largest tree."

On July 3rd the information was received of Sir Edmund Lyons' elevation to the peerage, and after a few days, during which the ship's company were employed in taking down and shipping the huts, the "Royal Albert" quitted Kazatch for the Bosphorus and anchored off Buyukdere on the 11th of the month.

The Crimea was given up on July 12th, and a couple of days later Admiral Fremantle, who had remained in command at Balaklava to the last, returned to Constantinople. On the 18th Lord Lyons arrived in the "Caradoc," and once more hoisted his flag on board the "Royal Albert," to my father's great satisfaction.

The ship now remained at Constantinople for some time, and a period of considerable social activity ensued; and under date July 20th my father writes as follows:—

"Attended at the Porte with the admiral. There were present Lord and Lady Stratford de Redcliffe, etc. *A déjeuner*

was given us in the gardens of the old Seraglio by order of the Sultan. Fouad Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, presided and did the honours. After the luncheon we were conducted through some of the kiosks, from some of which the views were very beautiful ; one, said to be built after the style of buildings in Bagdad, was in itself a jewel of elegance and beauty. We were also shown the treasury and the depository of the royal jewels, amongst which the pearl-embroidered ottoman covers are very beautiful. We passed through the old Hall of Justice and through the old audience-chamber where the infidel ambassadors used to be received by the sultans, and thence to the rooms where they were washed and fed before being conducted into the presence of majesty. When we quitted Stamboul at six o'clock, I must say that I was greatly pleased at all that I had seen."

On August 25th the Russian ambassador, M. Boutanief, visited the ship, and was received with all the usual honours.

This sort of social life, which went on for some months, but ill suited my father, who felt the reaction after the storm and stress of war perhaps more than others did. He found relief, however, in bringing the ship to as high a state of efficiency as was possible under the circumstances. He also rode a great deal, his companions being fellow naval officers as a rule, amongst whom the names of Captain Eardley Wilmot, of the "Sphynx," Lieutenant Fellowes,* of his own ship, and Mr. Cleeve, the secretary, occur frequently in the pages of his diary. Thus passed the remainder of the year 1856, and my father, who was no great courtier, seems to have got heartily sick of the sort of life, and applied to the Admiralty, and also used all the little interest at his disposal, in order to be transferred to a more congenial sphere of employment. The following entry of November 1st in his diary is perhaps worth quoting before closing my account of this part of his career :—

"Accompanied the commander-in-chief to the Sultan's palace to be present at the ceremony of His Majesty's

* Afterwards Admiral Fellowes. He had been mate of the upper deck in the "Vengeance" and one of my father's greatest friends.

investiture with the Order of the Garter by our ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. Sir Charles Young, Garter King-at-Arms, and two heralds had been sent from England with it. Reschid Pasha stood at the head of the ministers, and together with Mahomet Ali Capitan Pasha, Omar Pasha, and others, were present near the throne. Lord Stratford, staff and officers of the army, about twenty in number, Sir Henry Bulwer and secretary, Lord Lyons, naval commander-in-chief, captains, commanders, Captain Adair, of the Marines,* the two senior lieutenants, and one midshipman—in all twenty-three from the Navy—were present. The ceremony was imposing and interesting."

Lord Lyons gave my father all the assistance in his power in carrying out his wish for change of employment, and communicated by telegraph with Sir C. Wood, First Lord of the Admiralty, on the subject, and also wrote in the kindest and most handsome manner. My father also wrote to Sir William Parker and others in England. It was not, however, till March, 1857, that he finally quitted the "Royal Albert," being appointed in command of the "Hastings," 60, stationed in the Mersey, and specially commissioned for the enrolment of volunteers for the Navy and Royal Naval Reserve.

On leaving the "Royal Albert" in the Bosphorus, her crew manned her side from jib-boom to taffrail, with hats off, and he was pulled to the gunboat, which took him to Constantinople, by a cutter's crew of officers, the admiral accompanying him and seeing him off on board the mail steamer at Constantinople.

The following letter to Sir Charles Wood, the First Lord of the Admiralty, illustrates my father's views at this time on the subject of the education of young naval officers, and I do not think he ever modified them in later years to any great extent, being always, as far as I can remember, in favour of a college on shore, and not a stationary training ship, and also of increasing the age of entry.

* Commanding the detachment of Marines on board "Royal Albert," afterwards Sir Charles Adair, K.C.B.

"From Captain Mends to Sir C. Wood.

"H.M.S. 'ROYAL ALBERT,' BOSPHORUS,

"September 1st, 1856.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Knowing your anxiety for the education and training of youth for the naval profession, I am induced to offer you a few observations on so important a subject, in the hope that I may be considered neither disrespectful nor irregular in sending them to you *direct* in the shape of a private letter.

"Day by day I become more convinced that something must be done to raise the intellectual standard of the naval officer, I mean the young officer just entering the Navy.

"After many years of practical experience and excellent opportunities of judging of the system that prevails, I am convinced of the impossibility of putting the requisite amount of knowledge into a youth on board ship who is to become a naval officer.

"I see the necessity there is for early training for the service before a boy embarks. The idea that boys cannot come to sea as midships too young is a great mistake in this age; that they cannot be trained too young I grant. I think a boy ought not to be embarked in a ship of war in which he has to begin upon his official duties before the age of fifteen; some officers incline to sixteen, but I am of opinion that at the former age he will have acquired a good groundwork and be disposed to follow up his studies in his leisure hours if aided by clever, sensible naval instructors.

"I earnestly hope to see a naval college restored on a proper footing, ensured against the abuses which led to its being abolished. The boy should enter it at eleven, and not quit it until he is fifteen, during which period he should be practically, as well as theoretically, trained for the service. I am satisfied that in one year after quitting such an establishment he would be an efficient young naval officer.

"Between eleven and fifteen of his age I think the boy should undergo an examination (impartially conducted by well-selected officers, as well as instructors) into the lad's fitness or otherwise, physically and intellectually. If considered unfit, he would not be so old as to cause embarrassment to his parents when returned upon their hands.

"The naval instructor of this ship is one of the best, if not the best, I have met with; he is painstaking, zealous, well-informed, and possesses the invaluable quality in a teacher—that of winning the entire confidence and regard of his pupils; he states as his opinion 'that the system of instruction on board ship is perfectly incompatible with the duties of the ship.'

"With that opinion I entirely agree; either the naval duties they should be learning in performance, or the schoolroom must be neglected. I do not suppose I take more pains than others, but I keep the boys pretty well at their work, short of worrying them to death, and I see how impossible it is for them to know anything perfectly; I also see how much the discipline of the service suffers from want of qualified mates and midships to conduct the duties of those grades. The following is a sort of summary of what a boy has to do here, and, I conclude, in other ships.

"During the six working days, excepting Saturday, the hours of school are from 9.15 to 11.30 a.m., and from 1 to 3.30 p.m. The boy has his log to keep up daily, his day and night watch to keep, varying from eight to six hours out of the twenty-four, which materially unfits him for the school table; if he were not to keep his watch he would not learn his profession; the morning watch, from four to eight, quite unfits a boy for study.

"If he belong to a boat he is called away on an average from four to six times between sunrise and 8 p.m.

"As midship of a top, to which they are all stationed at intervals, he must go aloft once, generally twice a day; he has his watch, quarter, and station bills to keep up, which, in a well-regulated ship, however systematically done, is no sinecure, and it takes him no little time to complete the first fair copy, when we reflect that he has to write the names of 900 men three times, and that he has also to make a station bill for that number in all evolutions; he must also keep a list of the clothes of a fifth of that number; he has to learn the cutlass, musket, and gun exercise, a portion of time being given daily to one or other; he is obliged to exercise the sails and spars on the mizzen-mast once or twice a week.

"Apart from the foregoing studies and duties, essentially his own, he is compelled to attend to all the general duties of the ship. The morning and evening parades or musters, the daily divisional exercise of the guns, the constant evolutionary exercises which sometimes occupy considerable time, are always followed by fatigue and a mind unsettled to study.

"The only tolerably quiet days free from distraction are Tuesday and Friday.

"The next question is the most fitting place for the schoolroom. Some captains kindly give up their fore cabins for the hours required, but it is not always convenient; some have screens on the decks. I have for years held it in their own mess place, which is attended with more advantages than any other. But where can the school be held in a ship out of the way of distracting sounds and exciting scenes?

"What I have written will, I trust, prove how irregular and un-

settled are the hours of study; how impossible it is to cram boys with all that is required, and how very superficial their knowledge must be. I wish also to show how essentially the discipline suffers from want of efficient mates and midshipmen. I have heard that an economical plan is in contemplation, viz., to compel many of the public schools in the United Kingdom to become preparatory schools for the Navy by nominating boys at a very early age for the service, with an assurance to their parents that if they were able to pass in certain specified branches when they attained the age of fifteen they would be given naval cadetships.

"This might be attended with apparent economy to the country, but would it really be so? Would the same results be obtained as in a Royal Naval College, where naval discipline, boating, and all the rudiments of shipbuilding and seamanship went hand in hand with the schoolroom? Would the elements so essential to the character of a naval officer be found in the aforesaid schools as compared with what ought to be impressed upon a boy in a Royal Naval College under good discipline? I think not, nor would that bond of union, high feeling, college regard and *esprit de corps* be gained, which existed even in the old naval college, with all its abuses. If what I have expressed in general terms fails to convey my meaning as clearly as could be desired, I shall be delighted if you see fit, sir, to enter more fully into the details of the present system, which I think full of harm, as well as the plan I propose.

"I have the honour, etc., etc.,

"W. R. MENDS."

"From Sir Charles Wood to Captain Mends.

"HICKLETON,

"September 12th, 1856.

"DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged to you for your letter on the very important and most difficult subject of naval education. I have been taking some pains about it, but I confess that I am puzzled by the very contradictory opinions of very distinguished officers.

"I am thankful, however, for every opinion and information on which I may be able to make up my mind.

"Yours truly,

"(Signed)

CHARLES WOOD.

"CAPTAIN MENDS."

Should any doubt remain in the reader's mind as to the causes which led my father to leave Lord Lyons' flag, it will be well to remember that the extreme injustice with which he had been treated by the entire omission of his name from the despatches of Admiral Dundas rankled in his mind, and he looked to his own chief to see him righted in this matter. The years, however, were slipping away, and nothing had been done to rectify this undoubted injustice, and although cordial relations existed between my father and Lord Lyons, and they continued in frequent correspondence till the latter's sad death in 1858, my father doubtless thought that the time had come when he might with greater advantage to his career terminate his duties as flag-captain.

Lord Lyons addressed a most eulogistic letter to the Secretary of the Admiralty on his leaving.*

* See Appendix XIV.

CHAPTER XXIII

1857-1862

ON arriving in England in April, 1857, my father assumed command of the 'Hastings,' the first district ship stationed in the Mersey for the enrolment of volunteers for the Royal Navy and Naval Reserve, and he threw himself with all his accustomed energy into the task of organizing and perfecting this new branch of the service, as far as his particular coast-guard district was concerned. His superior officer at the Admiralty at this time was Captain Charles Eden, whose name will be familiar to the reader as captain of the "London" in the Crimea. Very many years had elapsed since the people of Liverpool had seen a man-of-war of any size in the Mersey, and oddly enough one of the last naval men who had been connected with the port was my father's uncle, Sir Robert Mends, who had been stationed there early in the century to discharge the duties of regulating officer, and some of the older members of the community remembered him well.

The "Hastings" was not at all a fine specimen of her class, being an old-fashioned two-decked ship, jury-rigged, and with very small steam power, so that her full speed was only something under seven knots, but little more than the rate of the Mersey spring tides. We can well imagine that she compared very unfavourably with the fine modern steamers with which the river was crowded; nevertheless, so enthusiastic were the people then, as indeed they always have been about naval matters, that they lined the banks in crowds and were delighted with her, especially at the sight of her guns, as she slowly steamed up the river on her first arrival.

My mother and sisters lived on board the ship, which lay in the winter at Rockferry, cruising in the summer, for the purpose of drilling the coast volunteers, to the Isle of Man, Holyhead, and other parts of my father's district.

As one of the objects for which the "Hastings" had been sent to the Mersey was to popularize the service and educate the people in naval matters, the ship was thrown open to visitors, who came on board her in crowds. On one occasion some 4000 factory hands from Manchester visited the ship, and were given the free run of nearly all parts of her, including the captain's fore and aft cabins, my mother and sisters having to spend the day locked into the side cabins in order to escape the too close attentions of the crowd, who appear to have regarded them as some strange sort of wild beasts.

A certain ill-feeling was supposed to exist at this time between the mercantile marine, upon which the Royal Navy at that time was in a great measure dependent for recruits, and the public service. This my father, who was extremely large-minded on all public matters, set himself to break down, and he had not been long in Liverpool before he found himself in complete accord with the Mercantile Marine Association and the heads of the shipping community in that great mercantile port.

The hospitalities of Liverpool are proverbial, and his anchor had scarcely been dropped in the Mersey before he and his officers received innumerable invitations on all sides; they were made members of almost every community and every institution in the port, and were most cordially welcomed by all. With this fair start, backed up by tact and energy, he was soon completely successful in his double mission of popularizing the Navy and of obtaining plenty of volunteers.*

* "H.M.S. 'NILE,' HOLYHEAD,

"August 4th, 1859.

"Sir,—I take the earliest opportunity afforded me after leaving the Mersey to tender you my sincere thanks for the great interest evinced by you in the manning of Her Majesty's ship under my command, and I beg you will permit me to express my high sense of the great exertions you have made in raising seamen for this purpose.

"The 'Nile' came to Liverpool with one hundred and seventy-five men (175) short of complement, and left with only thirty (30) short, showing that one hundred and forty-five (145) were raised at Liverpool.

"These facts speak for themselves, and I can only say that this success could not have been obtained had it not been for the presence of the 'Hastings.'

"I have the honour to remain, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"A. EARDLEY WILMOT, *Captain.*

"CAPTAIN MENDS, C.B., *H.M.S. Hastings.*"

Public interest in the events of the Crimean War was still running very high at this time, and questions concerning it continued to pour in upon him during the next few years. Much of a voluminous correspondence written at this time relates to this.* His views and opinions on the whole of that campaign are, however, I think, quite sufficiently set forth in the preceding pages; I therefore avoid the insertion of a large number of letters. He remained in frequent correspondence with Lord Lyons, some of whose letters are of interest as showing the friendly relations that existed between the two men.

“H.M.S. ‘ROYAL ALBERT,’ MALTA,

“*May 18th, 1857.*

“MY DEAR MENDES,—Your letters of the 2nd and 10th of May have arrived together, and right welcome they are, for I am really glad that all things regarding yourself, your family, and your ship are satisfactory, and certainly all that you write of on other matters is very interesting to me, and I hope that you will continue to write to me in the same friendly spirit. I look upon the jealousy of the Black Sea Fleet as a proof of our success, for the heart must undergo a great change before the latter fails to produce the former, it is simply cause and effect. My separation from the ships of my fleet after the campaign of 1855, and their subsequent employment in the conveyance of troops, etc., renders me altogether irresponsible with regard to them, and I believe that all those which have gone home since have been in good order, excepting the —, and you know how deeply I regretted the state she was in during the very short time we were together.

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“We shall see in the approaching summer cruise whether this ship can maintain her present superiority in sailing and in evolutions aloft. The three ships of the line here were flagged the same day that the ‘R. A.’ was in the Bosphorus, so in that respect we move on an equality with them. I have lately inspected the ‘Circassia’ and ‘Vulture,’ and I can assure you that nothing could be better. The ‘Circassia’s’ men knocked the guns about as if they were the favourite playthings of the officers and men, and I may say the same of the muskets and cutlasses. The ship, too, was scrupulously clean, and everything seemed to have been carefully attended to—all so different from what we had been led to expect by ill-natured people.

* A pamphlet (on the transport from Varna and landing of the army at Old Fort) written by my father at this time had been published by the War Office.

"What you tell me of Denman's communication is very interesting to me. I saw a letter from Sir J. Pennefather with reference to the honours paid to me here, in which he says, "We redjackets look upon Lord Lyons as the first man of the late war, soldier or sailor." The personage who spoke in the same sense to Denman has recorded his opinion in writing. I mention all this to you as my able coadjutor in the events to which it relates. That the truth will come out in the end I have no doubt, though there are many whose interest it is to smother it.

* * * * *

"If you see Heath and other good fellows of the Black Sea Fleet, tell them they are always in my thoughts, not forgetting George King, for whom you know I have a sincere regard, and a high opinion of him; he will be a valuable man in China.

"Predispose Mrs. Mends and your children towards me, and believe me, my dear Mends,

"Yours sincerely,

"LYONS."

" 'ROYAL ALBERT,' OFF CORSICA,

"June 26th, 1857.

"MY DEAR MENDS,—The 'Vigilant' has brought me your most interesting letter after your visit to London and your conversations with the admirals at Portsmouth.

"The truth is in a nutshell; if Admiral Dundas had but listened to Lord Raglan and to me, things would have gone well and he would have had the credit of it. That is one fact, and another is that if we had not organized the naval part of the expedition in spite of his opposition it never could have taken place, and he would have been covered with obloquy both in England and France; in a word, I saved him in spite of himself.

"I am very glad that things look so well with you and your new occupations, and I shall watch your progress with sincere interest.

"You would be quite astonished, as indeed we all are, to see the way in which the 'Royal Albert' beats the other ships, both on a wind and going free; but hitherto, though we have had strong winds, the water has been smooth.

"Your station-bill is quite a treasure.

"Offer my kind regards to Mrs. Mends, and believe me,

"Yours sincerely,

"LYONS.

"There *cannot possibly* be a doubt of your having the 'Medjidie.'"

“MALTA,

“February 1st, 1858.

“MY DEAR MENDS,—. . . It gives me very great pleasure to find that you are well satisfied with your post, and I am as sure as if I were an eye-witness of it that the country is deriving benefit from your zeal and talents; indeed, I may soon be an eye-witness of it, for the ‘Marlborough’ is on the eve of being commissioned for Admiral Fanshawe, and I trust we shall be home before the hot weather sets in, and that I may have a little rest after more than thirty consecutive years in harness.

“The ship is in good order and good humour, and looking all the better from my having persuaded Mr. Ladds to fill up the hollows in her cutwater. I am anxious about Watson’s* promotion, and I cannot account for the deafness of the Admiralty to all negotiations in his favour. It is a fact, and a very strange one, that they think, on the Board, they have done more for my followers than for those of any other flag officer, whereas they have literally done nothing. The refusal to give Cleeve the C.B. and to promote Watson I cannot get over, though in any other respect Sir C. Wood has been *very friendly*.

“Tell Mrs. Mends and your children that I hope soon to be personally known to them, and believe me, my dear Mends,

“Yours sincerely,

“LYONS.”

“MALTA,

“March 26th, 1858.

“MY DEAR MENDS,—I enclose a copy of a letter that I have just received from Admiral Bouët Willaumez, and I write by this post to my booksellers, Bickers and Bush, Leicester Square, to beg them to send you, as a present from me, Bazancourt’s *La Marine française dans la Mer noire et la Baltique*. It seems to me to be as impartial as one could expect under the circumstances, and you will see that the account of the departure of the respective fleets from Baltschik is exact, and consequently in direct opposition to that given by Aunt Betsey. I understand that the Emperor forbade Bazancourt to write a syllable disparaging to Admiral Dundas; hence the way in which the delay of our fleet at Baltschik, the dilatoriness of the ‘Britannia,’ and the shortcomings of the 17th October are passed over. You will see that McArthur gives

* Afterwards Admiral Sir George W. Watson, K.C.B.

the French the credit of placing the lights that were in truth placed by Clarence Paget for the night attacks, and that he gives to Bruat at least as much credit as to me for the expedition to Kertch.

"A few days before the fall of the Palmerston Ministry I had letters from Sir Charles Wood and Drummond, saying that they were 'hard at work in the distribution of the "Medjidie,"' but I conclude that this work was not completed when they were worsted, and that they only gazetted those that were given by the Sultan to Sir H. Stewart, Slade, and Borlase at Constantinople. There cannot, however, be any doubt of the Navy having their share, though the delay is much to be regretted.

"You may be very sure that I am quite alive to the claims of those who so nobly supported me.

"My stay here is fast drawing to a close, for I intend to take the squadron to sea on the 10th of April, but I doubt my successor being here before the end of May. Our harbour exercises have been well kept up, and the 'R. A.' is decidedly the best, and as I make the signals from the Palace Tower she can have no advantages. Last Monday all the ships had royals set again within 18 minutes after shifting the three topsail yards, and 'R. A.' had jibs and the top-gallant sails and royals set in 8 minutes 26 seconds, after shifting jib-boom and stream and kedge anchors and cables away from the ship. The field piece drill is the admiration of all beholders, and it draws a large number of spectators, male and female. The Marines, too, under Adair do remarkably well, and Hewett has had companies in succession at St. George's Bay practising with the Enfield rifle under the direction of Captain Snow, who has been sent from England to drill the different regiments in succession.

"I tell you all these things because I know that you have at heart the credit and efficiency of our glorious profession.

"With my kind regards to Mrs. Mends, believe me, my dear Mends,

"Yours sincerely,

"LYONS.

"I had a glimpse of your brother as he passed by on his way to China."

"'ROYAL ALBERT,' OFF MALTA,

"April 15th, 1858.

"MY DEAR MENDS,—As we were coming out of the harbour your letter of the 17th was put into my hand. Although there could hardly have been a possibility of a doubt of your having a proper place in the lists of the 'Medjidie,' still I thought it as well towards the last to make sure of it.

"Wilmot should bear in mind that although Admiral Dundas chose to mix me with all the officers and men in the fleet in his thanks on the 17th October, it has not deprived me of the credit that I may have gained, and that the 'Agamemnon' certainly did gain, on that day. Nor can his being classed with those who were not particularly mentioned by the commander-in-chief deprive him or the 'Sphinx' of the reputation they earned on that day. But I agree with you in regretting that they did not '*leave well alone*.' You know what a high opinion I have of Wilmot, and that I am never slow to take every opportunity of saying so. You have done well to advise him to be patient.

"I have backed up your recommendation of Hope and Long* in a letter to Sir John Hartington.

* * * * *

"I have not the time to look over the list of 'Medjidie,' but why Wilmot and Stewart should not be in the third class with others who were captains on the 17th October I cannot imagine; but let him leave it alone for the present, and I will see what can be done.

"With kindest regards to Mrs. Mends,

"Believe me,

"In the greatest haste,

"Yours sincerely,

"LYONS."

Amongst his friends at this time was Captain Boutakoff, of the Russian Imperial Navy, whose brother, Admiral Boutakoff, had had the command of the "Vladimir" during the Crimean War. The reader may remember that this little ship had occasionally made a dash out of the harbour of Sebastopol, and created a diversion when least expected, her commander showing much energy and skill. Both the brothers were at Liverpool, superintending the construction of a flotilla of light-draught gunboats for use in the Aral Sea, and it was of the greatest interest to my father to discuss professional matters connected with the late war with one who had taken an active part in it on the opposite side.

The following correspondence, which passed between my father and Admiral Sir Alexander Milne at this time, inasmuch as it throws a light on my father's views upon the

* Afterwards Admiral Samuel Long.

question of the desirability, or otherwise, of conveying troops in ships of war, and also gives an outline of the duties which devolved upon him at this time, may find a place here.

“ADMIRALTY,

“*May 31st, 1858.*

“DEAR CAPTAIN MENDS,—No doubt you saw in the late debate in the House of Commons that Lord Clarence Paget wanted to give you a job to carry troops between Liverpool and Ireland, and as some of my friends think this would be a very nice and agreeable amusement for you to exercise your coast volunteers, I will be obliged if you will let me know how far you are *prepared* to perform this service, and what objections you have to offer to your being so employed.

“In haste,

“Very truly yours,

“ALEXANDER MILNE.”

“‘H.M.S. HASTINGS,’ HOLYHEAD,

“*June 2nd, 1858.*

“MY DEAR ADMIRAL MILNE,—I did read Lord C. Paget’s speech in the House of Commons, and thought at first that, however disagreeable the duty, it would be a saving of expense to the Government if an efficient, well-powered ship were stationed at Liverpool that might *occasionally* be available for this service. On further reflection I saw many difficulties, and I confess I am not prepared to do so in the ‘Hastings’ for the following reasons:

“1st. That being *jury-rigged*, with very small steam-power, with a draught of 23 feet, she is not a desirable ship for moving about in narrow waters and strong tides. At her best steam speed, under favourable circumstances, she only goes $6\frac{1}{2}$ knots, the rate of the Mersey springs.

“2nd. That out of a small complement I man two tenders and officer one, the ‘Seamew’ not having as yet picked up a crew.

“Thus much as regards the ‘Hastings.’ Other still more important reasons oppose themselves to the district guardship being employed *at all* to carry troops between Liverpool and Ireland.

“1st. The various duties in connection with the coastguard and coast volunteer force demanding the unremitting attention of the captain.

“2nd. That as the volunteers are called on board for the purpose of being taught a little quiet, wholesome discipline, gun drill, and

target practice, I think that object would be defeated if the ship were employed carrying troops, such service having a very demoralizing effect on a well-disciplined crew, how much more so on men undergoing their training.

"3rd. That during the summer months the coastguardsmen are to come on board for their gun drill. Those belonging to the 'Bangor Division' are now embarked, and I purpose taking the other four in succession.

"4th. That once during each quarter I inspect my district, which occupies about a fortnight. I intend going my round as soon as I have seen to the monthly payments.

"When these duties are completed there are certain times, of short duration, when the district ship, if of good steam-power, might be available; but I suspect the expense caused by the slower movements of the man-of-war would be greater than that incurred by the merchant steamer. I have been free in giving my opinion, as you asked it, and I confess I have a decided aversion to making troopships of regular ships of war, but I am ready and willing to do anything useful, and will do my best.

"Believe me,

"Yours faithfully,

"W. R. MENDS."

In October, 1858, my father received news from the Duke of Norfolk of the illness at Arundel Castle of Lord Lyons, who had given up his command in the Mediterranean and returned to England, and in November came the sad intelligence of his death. My father attended his funeral, and whilst following the remains of his old chief to the grave he seems to have felt that not only had the country and the naval service lost a great leader, but that he himself had lost a valued personal friend.

Amongst others of historical interest with whom he kept up a friendly correspondence during these and subsequent years was Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, who was chief of the staff to Admiral Bruat during the Crimean War.

It was a notable trait in my father's character that he lost no opportunity of ascertaining the views of others on all subjects of public importance, and however these views might differ from his own he gave them their due consideration. The following letter from Admiral Jurien (which

I translate) illustrates not only the wide range of subjects which he discussed with others, but also serves to emphasize the friendly relations that existed between British and French naval officers both during and after the Crimean War.

“SEINE ET OISE,

“*November 8th, 1860.*

“MY DEAR MENDS,—I write from the country, where I usually pass eight months of the year, but after the 20th of December I am always at Paris, No. 7, Rue Greffulke, where your letters will find me. It gratified me to receive your affectionate remembrances, and I hope that on your side you received the letter I wrote to you, while still anchored before Venice. I experienced a great disappointment, and had all my plans upset by the peace of Villafranca. It is true that I had already ceased to be commander-in-chief, and the disappointment of that alone ought to have been less; it was, however, a great event in the career of a sailor to have been enabled to contribute something towards the deliverance of the Queen of the Adriatic. The Venetians are, no doubt, more thoroughly Italian, and more worthy of interest than the Neapolitans, but I think it was wise to leave them the autonomy that, until the last moment, the much to be lamented Manin has not ceased to reclaim for them. I honestly tell you, my dear friend, that I can never be either a revolutionist or a democrat, and perhaps the sole cause is that I am thoroughly liberal. If I have any fault to find with your country it is because her policy inclines towards democracy, and she makes herself its auxiliary, and so will lay the foundation of events which no one will be able to control. This great movement of the Volunteers, that you admire so much, is not perhaps free from danger; you put arms in the hands of a population that a few constables usually suffice to control. Picture to yourself what a rising of the Chartists would be, armed with Enfield rifles. Permit me to hope, for the welfare of civilization, that it will not be long before the arms are again deposited in the arsenals, and that England will continue to be what she showed herself in 1848—the *breakwater* of the revolution. It is not consistent that a country so sensible and determined should lose the reality for the shadow, and abandon her great institutions for the vain illusions of democrats. I sincerely wish your constitution was possible in France; we have not, unhappily, the essential element of such a constitution, the aristocracy; ours disappeared under Richelieu. It is that which explains our constant storms, and which ought to make us thankful for the calm, however precarious, that we at present enjoy. I think with you, that the wisdom of our Sovereign will know how to pre-

vent a war. There would certainly be no advantage either for France or England in a conflict, the issue of which would be so uncertain. If I was charged with dictating the conditions of a peace that victory had given us the right to dictate, I really cannot tell what I could demand from you unless it were that you should be less grumbling, less jealous ; in a word, a *better temper*. At heart the French and English wish on nearly all questions the same things. The great subject of disagreement is the increase which each nation is making in her navy. *You* wish to be incontestably masters of the sea, and to fear neither us nor any maritime coalition ; *we* do not object to this pretension up to a certain point. We should not wish, however, that your security should be such, that you should imagine yourselves able to treat us in any way you like. Suppose, for instance, that your naval supremacy enabled you to come without much effort and blockade our commercial ports, ravage our coasts, insult our naval ports ; do you not think that we should not have as much reason as yourselves to be as discontented and anxious as *you* are when menaced with an impossible invasion ? How, then, are we to avoid such a danger, if not by increasing our Navy ? We are too rich, too industrious, too dependent on other nations, to face indifferently the prospect of a blockade like the one that Russia had to submit to during two years.

“A like treatment would not only ruin France, but would give great cause to fear a social revolution. We *must* secure the perfect freedom of our coasts, therefore we must regulate *our* progress by *yours*. Alas ! we do not do enough. I fear I a little play the part of Cassandra on this subject, but I console myself with the thought that there are no serious reasons *why* we should go to war, and that consequently we shall be wise enough to live in peace. I like you much better, my dear companions of the Black Sea, for allies than enemies, you especially, my dear Mends, and many other officers with whom I should be so happy to co-operate in some great common work. But even the pleasure of fighting again at your side is not a reason for me to desire a war. Better would it be, as you say so well, to find some other employment for our activity. Give my affectionate compliments to Drummond, Lord Paget, and all the old Agamemnons.

“Yours sincerely,

“E. JURIEN.”

Early in 1860 the “Hastings” was replaced by the “Majestic,” a finer ship, in which my father continued the same duties until January, 1861, when he was appointed to the office of Deputy Controller of H.M. Coastguard.

Not only had he achieved a marked success in organizing the Coastguard service and Naval Reserve along that part of the coast, but he had also taken a very active part in starting the school ship "Conway" for training officers for the mercantile marine, and the value and success of his efforts were recognized by the Mercantile Marine Service Association of Liverpool, who presented him with an illuminated address on vellum in acknowledgment, whilst from the Mayor and leading shipowners and merchants he received a handsome service of plate.

My father left Liverpool early in 1861 to take up the duties of Deputy Controller-General of Coastguard at the Admiralty. My mother and three sisters also came to London, and in the middle of a hard and gloomy winter took a house near the Harrow Road, and here, in the course of the year, I was born.

My father's connection with the Coastguard service did not, however, last very long, for in May, 1862, he was appointed to conduct the very important and responsible duties of organizing and administering the Transport Department of the Admiralty, with the title of Director of Transports.

The following "Memoranda on Manning the Navy," written by him at this time, are interesting when it is remembered that this was a transitional period in the history of our Navy. The old system of picking up a crew by volunteering men for a commission of three or four years, at the end of which they would be turned adrift again, to volunteer or not as they might choose, with the next captain they happened to come across who was fitting out, or by the barbarous and un-English system of the press-gang, was to give place to a system of continuous service.

Amongst the principal causes necessitating a change at this time, must be mentioned the deterioration of the material available for enlistment into the Royal Navy from the mercantile marine. The abolition of the old Navigation Laws (which, by the way, have never been re-enacted in anything like a similar form) had brought about an enormous increase in the number of aliens serving in British merchant ships, whilst the introduction of steam was already beginning to have a marked effect in the quality of seamen obtainable.

"MEMORANDA ON MANNING THE NAVY.

" *Department of the Commodore
Controller-General of Coastguard.*

" ADMIRALTY, COASTGUARD OFFICE,
" 12, SPRING GARDENS, S.W., 1861.

"The First Sea Lord is repeatedly driven to expedients to man one or two ships, there being no regular system for manning them, and at present the reserve Coastguard ships are only partially manned, the crews having been removed to supply the wants of ships newly commissioned 500 *short*.

"All the recommendations of the Manning Commission and other Commissions appear to pass unheeded.

"The adult class for the R.N.R. would appear to be succeeding as its advantages become known, and prejudices against the naval service wear away; but a more complete system of training is required for the Navy and the marine of the country generally.

"The class of *seamen* have not increased in proportion with the increase of trade. Seamen *so-called* appear in large numbers, but the deterioration is acknowledged on all hands, for which many causes have combined: the gold-diggings; the large increase in the steam marine; the mechanical appliances in merchant ships to do the work formerly performed by men; the free intercourse with the United States, in whose ships large numbers of English seamen sail, particularly deserters from ships of war, as they can easily escape detection. Moreover no law exists in this country for the regulations of the entry of seamen under a foreign flag.

"The continuous service is decidedly a good system, if more completely carried out, with a home and foreign service; the period for leave now allowed to men returning from abroad being generally insufficient.

"During peace, and where the exigencies of the service do not demand it, the periods of service in ships out of England should not exceed three years—for one year in England.

"Why cannot the number of seamen be as easily provided for as the number of marines? There is never any difficulty about marines; but the sliding-scale is always applied to the bluejacket, who is certainly not of less value to the country.

"Every encouragement by promotion should be given to merit. Interest should not have weight over merit.

"An age should be fixed for retirement in all classes, and a retiring pay should be given in accordance with time *served* as a

commissioned officer, the commencement of commissioned time to be faithfully adhered to, the executive to date from the period of sub-lieutenant, formerly called mate.

"Retirement of admirals to be compulsory, in order that captains shall rise to their proper positions on the list.

"I have never had the ill-luck to serve with a bad ship's company. The 'Royal Albert' came to the Crimea in the end of 1854. She was manned by drafts from many ships and about 190 coastguardsmen, who, with few exceptions, were capital men. I think twelve ships contributed to man the 'Royal Albert.'

"I had heard that the 'Agamemnon' had a bad ship's company before I joined her. I did not find such to be the case, and at their guns they were superior to many long-commissioned ships. She had many seamen from the merchant service who were good seamen, but not so quick in their movements as men trained in ships of war; but she would have fought a capital action. I have learnt that a large portion of her crew left the service at the termination of the war. Receiving no grant or prize-money was a great grievance to the seamen. I think it was generally expected on the fall of Sebastopol.

"Officers also expected it, seeing that we had to pay double income-tax, double insurance, and a very high rate for the necessities of life. Though the seamen could not participate in all the glories of the siege, except the Naval Brigade, their duties had been most arduous, and the Crimea could not have been held for a day without their aid."

On severing his connection with the Coastguard service he received the following letter from his chief, Commodore Yelverton * :—

*"Department of the Commodore
Controller-General of Coastguard.*

ADMIRALTY, COASTGUARD OFFICE,
"12, SPRING GARDENS, S.W.
"May 3rd, 1862.

"SIR,—I cannot permit you to relinquish your appointment as Deputy Controller-General of the Coastguard without bearing testimony to your very useful and energetic services during the period you have held the office.

"I have received at your hands much able and valuable assistance, and on subjects which have required our joint deliberation

* Afterwards Admiral Sir Hastings Yelverton.

I have been particularly benefited by your sound opinions and unfailing judgment.

"Whilst regretting your removal, which I feel sensibly to be a loss to myself in particular, as well as to the Coastguard service in general, I beg sincerely to congratulate you on your appointment as Director of Transports; it is an important post, which I rejoice to find entrusted to an officer whose interest and success in that particular branch of duty is so well known and recognized by the service at large, and on whose exertions for its future management no doubt can be entertained.

"In entering on these new duties, allow me to assure you of my warmest wishes for your welfare and future happiness.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"H. W. YELVERTON,

"*Commodore Controller-General.*

"CAPTAIN MENDS, C.B., etc.,

Director of Transports, Somerset House."

CHAPTER XXIV

1862-1883

MY father was the first head of the Transport Department of the Admiralty on its reconstitution as a separate department in 1862, and not only was his reputation associated with it for some twenty of the hardest working years of his life, but also its organization as it now stands was very largely his work.

I think it desirable, therefore, to preface this chapter with a few remarks as to the causes which led to its re-establishment.

A separate Transport Department, under the Admiralty, was no new thing, it had existed from 1710 to 1724, and again from 1796 to 1817; but in times of peace the duties of sea transport had been carried out by other naval departments, and from 1832, when the general rearrangement of the Admiralty under Act 2 William IV. took place, it was assigned to the Comptroller of Victualling. On the outbreak of the war with Russia in 1854 the pressure brought to bear upon the transport branch of the naval service was such that in February, 1855, a temporary transport board was established which existed until the early part of 1857, when it was abolished, and its duties reverted to the Comptroller of Victualling.

Public attention had, however, been a good deal attracted to the problem of sea transport, first, by the investigations of the Parliamentary Committee which sat at the close of the Crimean War, and, afterwards, by the Committee which reported in July, 1858, as to the steps taken for reinforcing the Army during the Indian Mutiny, and as to the arrangements which should be made towards meeting in the future any important emergencies involving the security of our Eastern dominions. In June, 1860, also, another Select

Committee of the House of Commons was appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. W. S. Lindsay, a shipowner, which included three naval and three military officers, "to enquire into the organization and management of those branches of the Admiralty, War Office, India Office, and Emigration Board, by which the business of transporting by means of shipping, troops, convicts, emigrants, materials of war, stores, and any other similar services is now performed."

This last Committee made an exhaustive enquiry, examining many witnesses, from Cabinet Ministers downwards, and reported unanimously, in June, 1861, in favour of a distinct and separate transport office under the control of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and in April, 1862, their recommendation was carried into effect by order in council, and my father was appointed as its first head.

At first the work of the department did not embrace the transport of troops between England and India, which continued to be conducted by the then existing Marine Department of the India Office, on the lines which had been adopted for many years by the East India Company, prior to the taking over of India by the Crown in 1858.

The Committee of 1858, previously referred to, had, however, had before it many schemes for substituting an overland service, *viâ* the Isthmus of Suez, for that round the Cape, although they had reported, incredible as it appears to us now, that the overland route should not be relied on for the ordinary transport of troops to India, and that even the employment of steam freight was too costly except in urgent cases.

Early in 1863, however, an elaborate plan, of which my father was the principal author, for conducting the Indian relief service overland, was prepared by the Admiralty at the request of the War Office, and sent to the India Office with the suggestion that, for the sake of uniformity, the transport department of the Admiralty should carry out the Indian reliefs if the scheme was adopted. The idea rapidly took root, and by the spring of 1864 the India Office had assented to the transfer, and had, moreover, undertaken to bear the cost of five troopships, to be built under the supervision of the Admiralty, to carry out the service. It was at this time, also, that the India Office, on my father's application, appointed the late Captain Crutten-

den, of the Indian Navy, to assist the Director of Transports as their representative.

The reader will require no stretch of imagination to realize the enormous amount of organization, forethought, and care required on my father's part, to ensure the complete success which afterwards crowned this new venture. As these five ships were the first of their class, as they have played no inconsiderable part in the history of the empire, and as they performed their duty without hitch or serious accident for some twenty-five years, a short description of them will not be out of place here. They were built from designs prepared by the Chief Constructor of the Navy, Sir E. J. Reed, K.C.B., from the special requirements furnished to him by my father, and their names, which became almost household words in both services, were "Serapis," "Crocodile," "Euphrates," "Jumna," and "Malabar." They were sister ships, and were built, under the supervision of officers of the department of the Comptroller of the Navy, by private firms. Their tonnage was 4173 tons, their length between perpendiculars 360 feet, and their depth of hold to top of floor-plates 22 feet 4 inches. Their speed was $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots, and their accommodation was such that never before, and possibly not since, had troops, invalids, and women and children been carried with such a regard for sanitation and comfort.

Before the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 the ships were divided in their duties, the troops being conveyed in them to Alexandria and transported overland to Suez, where they re-embarked in one of them for India. There was a supervising transport officer stationed at Alexandria, and one at Suez, these duties being entrusted to Captain Willoughby, R.N., at the former, and Captain Chitty, R.N., at the latter port. After the opening of the Canal the ships, of course, went right through to India, and became a most important factor in determining the supreme importance of the Suez Canal to this country. My father held, and with great justice, that the regular passage of these great white ships, laden with troops, to and fro through the Canal, the whole scheme working regularly and without a hitch, year in and year out, did much to enhance the national prestige. In connection with the Indian troopships the following letters are of interest:—



"AN INDIAN TROOPER."

From a photograph by Synonds & Co., Portsmouth,

*"From Commodore Rodgers, U.S. Navy, to Rear-Admiral
W. R. Mends.*

"LONDON,

"March 2nd [no year].

"MY DEAR SIR,—I beg to thank you most cordially for your great kindness in sending me the plans and papers relating to your transport service, which have just reached me.*

"The Indian troopships have been brought to an extraordinary degree of perfection in all their details, and the forethought and consideration manifested in their arrangement struck me as marvellous.

"I am very much obliged to you for giving me so much information concerning them, and I shall examine the ships again, with renewed zest, when I reach Portsmouth."

"INDIA OFFICE, S.W.,

"June 26th, 1868.

"SIR,—I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th May, forwarding copy of a report from the Director of Transports of the 19th instant, on the working of the Overland Troop Service, to and from India, for the season 1867-68, together with various tabular statements.

"2. In reply I am instructed to request you will inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that Sir Stafford Northcote considers the manner in which the service of the troopships has been performed during the past—their first season—to be highly satisfactory, and that he believes this to be mainly due to the energy and ability displayed by Captain Mends himself in the management and control of the service.

"3. Captain Mends' suggestion that another vessel should be provided will be taken into consideration so soon as that officer's report upon the financial results of the year's operations shall have been received and considered. . . .

"I have, etc.,

"(Signed) T. T. PEARS, *Major-General,*

"Military Secretary.

"To the Secretary, Admiralty."

It must be understood by the reader that this Indian transport work was a duty undertaken by the department in

* That this was done with the permission of the authorities goes without saying; no one was more scrupulous in such matters than my father.

addition to its previous functions, which comprised, amongst many other things, the usual reliefs, both naval and military, in the various parts of our Colonial Empire.

The Transport Department, therefore, became responsible for the safe conveyance by sea of between fifty and sixty thousand men, with the permitted proportion of their families, annually, in addition to warlike stores for the Army, and stores and provisions for the Navy, together with all Government passengers, either in contract packets or in hired ships. It is not too much to say that the economy and efficiency with which this work is carried out mark the department as being one of the best organized under the Crown. It must be remembered also that sudden calls for troops to be sent to various parts of the world are of not infrequent occurrence, and the history of my father's work as Director of Transports is, naturally, intimately associated with the various wars and expeditions in which the country engaged during his tenure of office ; thus, the Abyssinian, the Ashantee, the various wars in South Africa, the transport of the Indian troops to Malta and back, and the Egyptian War of 1882, form a record of the emergencies which the department had to deal with, under my father's guidance, in its comparative infancy.

The following correspondence with Admiral Sir Alexander Milne is a fair sample of a vast number of letters in my possession, showing how much his work was appreciated :—

“INVERAH, MUSSELBURG—,

“*March 8th, 1879.*

“MY DEAR MENDS,—“I have been watching with great interest all your work in regard to the transports and the despatch of reinforcements to the Cape, and it has been no small pleasure to me to see how admirably the service has been carried out, and the speed with which the ships have been got ready and despatched. I cannot resist sending you a line, for I think everyone who has any knowledge of what has to be done on such an occasion must feel greatly gratified at the ability and zeal which has been displayed by yourself and the Transport Department. You all deserve immense credit, and I venture to offer you and all engaged my congratulations, coming from one who has worked in early days in the same field.

“With all good wishes,

“Yours always sincerely,

“ALEXANDER MILNE.”

“ADMIRALTY, WHITEHALL,

“ *March 10th, 1879.*

“MY DEAR SIR ALEXANDER,—I cannot say how gratified I am at receiving your note of the 8th commendatory of our proceedings in despatching reinforcements to the Cape. Coming from one who for so many years participated in Admiralty administration, and who is held in such high respect within its walls, such an expression of opinion is more than ordinarily acceptable, specially so to this department, the business of which no one understands better than yourself. I have, therefore, caused your note to be read to the gentlemen who have so ably assisted me to give effect to the system and arrangements which I have been doing my best to perfect for some years.

“The force embarked consists of

“ 340 officers,

“ 7700 men,

“ 1830 horses,

“ 170 waggon.

“A month's shore rations to land with the troops has been put on board each ship, and about 6000 tons of cargo.

“I undertook to be ready to embark the entire force in from twelve to fourteen days, which would have been literally accomplished but for the strike at Liverpool, which compelled us to postpone the departure of two ships a day each. The whole had sailed in sixteen days from the date of my receiving the requisite orders.

“Believe me, etc.,

“W. R. MENDS.”

Amongst the other important duties performed by the department may be mentioned the supervision of subsidized merchant steamers which are capable of acting as troop-ships, and the numbers of which it is necessary to enormously increase in times of emergency. Under the system inaugurated by my father, a record is kept of the capabilities of each ship and of the duties for which she is best fitted; the ships from time to time are inspected and the lists kept up to date. The reader must bear in mind that what one ship can do another cannot, and that one which may be perfectly suitable for carrying infantry is quite the reverse when it is a question of transporting cavalry or horse artillery. Then there is the question of invalids, and hospital

ships. The pitch of perfection to which my father's care and technical knowledge, and his insistence on the importance of details, brought this branch of the department was well shown in the Egyptian campaign of 1882, when over 150 merchant steamers were chartered for the conveyance of troops and stores, and the whole thing worked with such smoothness and success that it excited the admiration not only of our own Government but of our continental neighbours as well. From a host of letters on this subject, I select one from a man who was probably as well qualified to know as anybody.

"H.M.S. 'ALEXANDRA,' MALTA,

"*December 1st, 1882.*

"MY DEAR MENDS,—I am delighted to see that you and Key have been given the G.C.B. in recognition of your services, *not* commencing with the Egyptian campaign. No one has more appreciated what both of you have done for us than I have. I did not like your 'Batavia' and one or two more, as you know; but the work superintended by you was done without a hitch, and it has excited the admiration of all nations, as I happen to know from various sources.

"Wishing you, my dear Mends, every possible happiness,

"I am,

"Yours most sincerely,

"J. BEAUCHAMP SEYMOUR."

To give a detailed account of his work during his many years of directorship would be wearying to the reader, and out of place in a biography of this nature. Suffice it to say, that under him the department developed a machine-like organization and regularity, which ensured invariable success.

Some of the innovations for which my father was principally responsible should, however, be specially recalled. Thus, for example, the fitting out of the "Victor Emanuel," as a hospital ship for the Ashantee Expedition, under Sir Garnet Wolseley, cost him much time and thought, and in order to meet the views of the medical service he executed a number of proposals, which had never before been adopted under such circumstances. The ship, a

wooden two-decker, was transformed into a floating hospital, replete with every appliance which the science of the day could suggest, and she performed her mission so successfully that the late Professor Parkes pronounced her the best and most perfectly fitted-out hospital ship that had ever left the shores of this or any other country. That the sister service appreciated his efforts on this occasion is shown by the following letter from the adjutant-general.

"December 2nd, 1873.

"MY DEAR MENDS,—I am extremely obliged to you for your note, and think under the circumstances that you have managed most capitably.

* * * * *

"I was on the point of writing to you, to suggest some description of the many and various valuable attributes of the 'Victor Emanuel' Hospital Ship being published. Her fine ventilation, water supply, ablution and bath arrangements, cooking facilities, ice-making per diem, distilling powers, swinging-cot arrangements, etc., etc., would form a highly interesting paper, and would be only due to yourself.

"Believe me always,

"Yours very truly,

"RICHARD AIREY."

Her precedent was followed in 1882, when the "Carthage" was fitted out for a similar duty in the Egyptian war, and a properly equipped hospital ship is now a well-understood and, comparatively speaking, cut and dried affair.

In 1865 he was made aide-de-camp to the Queen, and in December, 1868, his position on the list of captains entitled him to promotion to the rank of rear-admiral, on the occurrence of the next vacancy, and it became a question whether he should return to active service or remain as the head of his department. The latter course was decided upon, and by an order in council (dated December 9th, 1868) he was promoted and placed on the retired list of flag officers, a special clause entitling him to rise, both in rank and to increased rates of half-pay, as he became entitled to the same. It was not without a pang of regret that my father finally severed his connection with "blue water," but he felt that the Transport Department afforded an almost unlimited field for doing good work,

and also that it was the sort of work for which he had a peculiar aptitude.

In 1871 he received his K.C.B., and not long afterwards he was sent to India to examine into the condition of the Indian marine, returning the following year. The exhaustive report which he drew up was characteristic of his careful work, and for it he received the thanks of the Viceregal Government. In 1874 he became a vice, and in 1879 a full admiral.

His position at the Admiralty was almost unique, no other naval officer of such high rank having served continuously for so long in one department. Moreover, responsible as he was to the heads, not only of the Admiralty, but of the India Office and War Office too, his position was frequently one of great delicacy, and required tact and judgment, both of which faculties he possessed in a high degree. Such was the opinion held of him by both services that he was frequently consulted on subjects entirely outside his own special department. He served on numerous committees, the most notable ones, perhaps, being that on the organization, etc., of the Indian troopships in 1879, and that held at the close of the Egyptian Campaign in 1882.

He secured the regard of those whose lot it was to work under him at the Admiralty, for whilst he was a strict disciplinarian, and exacted the greatest amount of attention to duty from all with whom he was associated in the office, he never spared himself where the public service was concerned.

In times of stress and emergency he was early and late in his office chair, leaving nothing to chance, and never shifting his responsibility on to the shoulders of those under him.

In 1882, after the Egyptian Campaign, he was decorated with the Grand Cross of the Bath, and early in 1883, having reached the age of seventy-one, he retired from the public service.

CHAPTER XXV

1883-1897

SOON after his retirement from public life my father and mother took a house at Alverstoke, overlooking Stokes Bay and the Solent, and there settled down to spend the evening of their days. For them the place had the attraction of old association, for they had lived here when he was in the "Vengeance," as the reader will remember, and for my father especially it was a particularly happy choice. From its proximity to Portsmouth he was enabled to remain in touch with the service he loved so well, and in which he had served so long. From his windows he could see the ships passing up and down the Solent or running the "measured mile"; oftentimes one of his old babies, an Indian trooper, would pass, always to his interest and delight. Here, in the many remaining years given to him, he was able to watch the gradual process of evolution taking place in ships of war, and he who had served in the old "Pique" and "Rodney" long before the introduction of steam, lived long enough to see such modern types as the "Terrible" and "Renown," and the new destroyers being put through their paces under his windows.

He kept himself in close touch, as long as he possibly could, with the younger members of the naval profession, and no man, I venture to say, of his age ever kept himself so up to date and so thoroughly well informed as to everything that appertained to it as he did.*

A remarkable trait in his character was his large-minded-

* The following letter to Mr. John Beresford Herbert, who had sent him his *Life and Services of Admiral Sir Thomas Foley, G.C.B.*, is interesting.

Captain, afterwards Sir Thomas Foley commanded the "Goliath," the leading British ship at the battle of the Nile, and by boldly passing inside the leading French ship, between her and the shoal, and engaging the ships of the French van on the inner side, did much to contribute towards their crushing defeat. This action was performed when the "Goliath" was almost isolated and a long way

ness and freedom from prejudice, where the service was concerned; he cared only for what was, in his opinion, for its good, and he always expressed that opinion fearlessly. In many ways he was ahead in his ideas, not only of his own time, but of the generation that came immediately after him. For instance, he was strongly in favour of the introduction of twin-screws and the abolition of masts and yards, and he used to speak of sail-drill on board an ironclad as “a prostitution of the noble science of seamanship”; a science, be it remembered, of which he himself had been no mean exponent. There was a time a short twenty years ago, which I can remember well,* when he stood almost alone amongst his *confrères* in this opinion. It is difficult to realize this now, but looking back one sees how unprejudiced and how well-founded his opinions were.

During these, the declining years of his life, one seldom found him alone, but almost always surrounded by naval friends. Such men as Admiral Sir George Tryon and Admiral Samuel Long he was wont to speak of as “his boys,” and it made one realize how far back in the service

ahead of the British fleet, and was done without orders from the flag, and my father's views upon such conduct are therefore instructive :—

“NO. 3A, ANGLESEY CRESCENT, ALVERSTOKE, HANTS,

“May 10th, 1884.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I trust you will not measure my appreciation of the sketch of the life and services of Admiral Sir Thomas Foley by this tardy recognition of your kindness in sending it to me. I value it extremely (outline though it be), as a just tribute to the memory of one of those great men (sea-kings, as a distinguished French admiral has called them) who, by their gallantry, seamanship, and dignity, helped to make our Navy famous in the world's history. No man would have appreciated more than the great Nelson Captain Foley's quickness of perception and promptness of execution in the course he took at the battle of the Nile, which doubtless materially contributed to the victory which the renowned admiral was so anxious to secure. Nelson himself could not have been unmindful of his own almost audacious act in Sir John Jervis' action off Cape St. Vincent, when, in disregard of the signal of his stern chief, he took a short way of closing with the enemy and brought his ship, the ‘Captain,’ in contact with two Spanish ships of the line, both of which he captured. It was never my good fortune even to see Sir Thomas Foley, but I often heard him spoken of by my great friend the late Admiral Hyde Parker, who was his flag captain at Portsmouth.

“Believe me,

“Yours very truly,

“W. R. MENDS.”

* In the year 1883 I can well remember how the idea of the Channel Fleet ever being a mastless one was loudly derided in the wardroom to which I belonged.

UNION OF
CALIFORNIA



ADMIRAL SIR W. R. MENDES, G.C.B.

From a photograph by J. West & Son, Gosport.

his experience went; fate decreed that he should outlive both these. He kept up a close correspondence with many men on the active list, too numerous to mention, he, on his part, anxious to know how things developed, they, on theirs, glad of his advice and experience.

Amongst his most frequent correspondents was Admiral Sir Frederick Richards, to whom the service generally, perhaps little knowing, owes so much. Sir Frederick had served under him as captain of the "Jumna" in the early seventies, and the two men had, I think, appreciated each other from the first.

He had always been a great reader, and as old age came upon him the habit increased. He read slowly, and had the power of picking out the salient features of a book and of retaining them. He was greatly interested in, and much admired, the works of the American writer Captain Mahan; and almost his latest correspondence was with him in connection with the *Life of Nelson*.

He used all the influence that he could to awaken the country to a sense of the great danger to which the low ebb that the Navy had been allowed to reach exposed it, and, whilst he had no jealousy whatever of the sister service, he often used to regret that the scare of invasion was only too frequently made use of to divert money to it, which could only properly attain its object, in his opinion, by being spent on the Navy. I may say, at once, that he was no admirer of War Office administration, and used to prophesy a breakdown in that department of the State when a real strain should come upon it; and when one remembers what abundant opportunities he had of judging of its working, during his long period as Director of Transports, this opinion is, perhaps, worth placing on record now. Happily he lived long enough to see public opinion take a healthier tone with regard to the Navy, and the country insist upon a thoroughly efficient first line of defence, and this was no small joy and solace to him in the last few years of his life.

Thus happily the years sped by, and he thoroughly enjoyed his well-earned rest and retirement, surrounded as he was by his family and very numerous friends.

In July, 1894, after an illness of only two days' duration, my mother was taken from him. He bore the shock with such fortitude as his indomitable pluck and his deep religious

convictions would have led one to expect, but he was never the same man again. The cruel blow, which dissolved a partnership of fifty-six and a half years' duration, struck at the root of his remaining vitality, and practically killed him. He lived on, however, for three years, long enough to witness the commencement of the assemblage under his windows of that vast fleet called together to celebrate Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee, and in the first few arrivals he took a great interest; but before the completion of the arrangements he had lost all knowledge of their existence, and within a few hours of the firing of the royal salute on the day of the review, June 26th, 1897, just before the illumination of the fleet, he breathed his last, a fitting scene to mark the close of his long and eventful career.

APPENDIX

I.

ADMIRAL WILLIAM BOWEN MENDS was born January 27th, 1781, and entered the Navy in November, 1794, as A.B. on "La Pomone," 40, Commodore Sir John Borlase Warren; on following whom as midshipman (after sharing in Lord Bridport's action, attending also the expedition in support of the French Royalists to Quiberon, and participating in a variety of boat and other service on the coast of France) into the "Canada," 74, he witnessed the defeat, October 12th, 1798, of a French squadron under Commodore Bompard, intended for the invasion of Ireland. In February, 1799, he became midshipman of "L'Impétueux," 74, Captain Sir Edward Pellew, and in the course of the same year he again joined Sir J. B. Warren in the "Téméraire," 98, and "Renown," 74. On the night of August 29th, 1800, immediately subsequent to the Ferrol expedition, we find him serving with the boats of a squadron, twenty in number, commanded by Lieutenant H. J. Burke, at the cutting-out, close to the batteries in Vigo Bay, of "La Guêpe," privateer, of 18 guns, 161 men, which vessel—twenty-five of whose people were killed and forty wounded—was in fifteen minutes boarded and carried, with the loss to the British of three seamen, one marine killed, three lieutenants, twelve seamen, and five marines wounded, one seaman missing. For his conduct in this affair Mr. Mends had the honour of being publicly thanked by the commander-in-chief, who, although he had not completed his time, at once ordered him to act as lieutenant-commander of the "St. Vincent," gun-brig. Being officially promoted April 9th, 1801, and appointed to the command of the "Ferreter," another gun-brig, he was afforded an opportunity in the course of the same year of enacting a part in Lord Nelson's attack on the Boulogne flotilla, on which occasion it appears he served in his own boat, and had four persons out of nine either killed or wounded. He paid the "Ferreter" off in September, 1802, and was next successively appointed July 4th, 1803, to the "Foudroyant," 80, bearing the flag of Sir Thomas Graves, in the Channel; March 19th, 1805, to the "Surinam," 18, Captain

Alexander Shippard, whom he accompanied to Gibraltar; about March, 1806, again to the "Foudroyant," flagship of Sir J. B. Warren, on the West India, North American, and home stations; April 13th, 1807, to the "Goliath," 74, Captain Peter Puget, under whom he served with the advanced squadron at the siege of Copenhagen, and so distinguished himself that a strong recommendation in his favour was forwarded to the commander-in-chief; and October 29th, 1807, to the "Swiftsure," 74, bearing the flag of Sir J. B. Warren, at Halifax, where, from June, 1808, to October, 1809, and from May to September, 1810, he was allowed to act as commander of the "Vesta," schooner, and "Indian," sloop. On leaving the "Swiftsure," Mr. Mends was presented with a second promotal commission, dated February 26th, 1811. After exactly two years of half-pay he obtained command, February 26th, 1813, of the "Loup Cervier," 18; and on March 23rd, 1814, having been intermediately employed at the blockade of New Zealand, he was nominated acting captain of the "Terpsichore," frigate, which ship he brought home and paid off on June 27th following. His promotion had in the meanwhile been confirmed by a commission, dated May 26th, 1814. His last appointments were:—January 24th, 1824, to the "Blanche," 46, in which frigate he conveyed Vice-Admiral Lord Amelius Beauclerk to the Tagus, and then proceeded to South America, whence, after having been for some time senior officer off the coast of Peru, he returned with nearly 800,000 dollars to England, September 28th, 1827; and November 26th, 1836, to the "Talavera," 74. In this ship Captain Mends was employed at first on the Lisbon station; then in affording co-operation, with a large squadron under his orders, to the Queen's forces during the civil war on the south-east coast of Spain; next in transporting the 73rd Regiment from Gibraltar to Halifax, and the 11th Regiment from that place to St. John's, New Brunswick; and finally in the Mediterranean, in the Greek portion of which he was for six months senior officer. The "Talavera" was put out of commission January 3rd, 1840. His next appointment was to the Plymouth ordinary, and this post he held until March, 1849, when he was promoted to the rank of rear-admiral. In January, 1856, he became vice-admiral on the active list, and nine months afterwards he accepted a good service pension, and was placed on the retired list. He rose to the rank of full admiral February 11th, 1861, and died in 1863, aged 83.

II.

MEMORANDUM OF THE SERVICES OF
THE LATE COMMODORE SIR ROBERT MENDS, KT., G.C.C., ETC.

MR. MENDS entered the naval service as midshipman on board His Majesty's ship "Culloden," January 1st, 1779, and on January, 16th, 1780, was serving on board the above ship at the capture and defeat of the Spanish fleet, under the command of Admiral Don Juan de Langara, by Admiral Sir George Rodney, when seven sail of the line were captured and destroyed. Was afterwards wrecked on the north coast of America, when he lost everything, and was subject to the greatest privations. In the year 1781 was serving in the "Guadaloupe," in the action of March 16th, between Admiral Arbuthnot and the French fleet, under the command of M. Destouches, off the Chesapeake; was afterwards employed, with a detachment of seamen from the fleet, to attend the army in Virginia, and was with it the whole of that campaign, which was a series of battles from April to October. Was present in the following principal engagements on that occasion, namely, with General Phillips' army at Petersburg, when the Americans were defeated; with Lord Cornwallis, when the Americans were defeated at James' Island; was in the action of Bermuda Hundreds, when the gunboats, assisted by the artillery on shore, took the whole of the enemy's squadron, consisting of thirteen sail of armed vessels, after a long and severe contest. Was at the siege of York Town, when Lord Cornwallis and the army were taken prisoners; on this occasion he was wounded by a shell in the left knee, and a cannon-ball shattered his right arm, which twice underwent amputation at subsequent periods. It may be here mentioned, that when lying ill from the effects of these severe wounds, the ship to which he had been removed caught fire, and his life was providentially preserved by a seaman (his hammock man), who, knowing him to be still on board, conveyed him to the boat that took the last of the crew and officers from the ship.

In 1782 he was serving in the "Conqueror," and was present at the defeat and capture of the French fleet under the Comte de Grasse, by Admiral Sir George Rodney, on the 9th and 12th of April, when he was wounded in the head by a splinter, and had the right side of the jawbone fractured. Was appointed acting lieutenant by Lord Rodney, after the action, into the "Shrewsbury"; was afterwards removed into the "Prothée, and paid off, the war being over.

He afterwards served as master's mate on board the following ships:—"Grampus," "Irresistible," "Scipio," "Crown," "Orion,"

and "Culloden," the two former of which were stationed for some time on the coast of Africa. In 1789 was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, by the special command of His Majesty George III., when visiting the "Culloden," then forming part of the fleet at Plymouth. His Majesty on this occasion, remarking a young officer severely wounded, immediately sent for and asked him to recount his services, which so interested him that he directed him to be promoted on the spot to the rank of post-captain; which, however, being contrary to the regulations in council, could not be done. From 1789 he served as lieutenant of the "Pylades," "Childers," and "Colossus," and was at the evacuation of Toulon in 1793. Was lieutenant of the "Colossus" in Lord Bridport's action off L'Orient on June 23rd, 1795, and was severely wounded, being burnt and bruised by the bursting of one of the lower-deck guns, and was blind of both eyes for several days. In 1796 was promoted to the rank of commander, into the "Diligence," sloop of eighteen guns, and on May 12th, 1797, captured, after an action of three-quarters of an hour, off Porto Rico, "La Natividad," Spanish brig of twenty-two guns; he was on this occasion wounded in his remaining arm by a musket-ball. On December 27th following, he proceeded, in company with His Majesty's ships "La Magicienne" and "Regulus," to Guadilla Bay, in the north-western part of the island of Porto Rico, anchoring abreast of, and cannonading the batteries for an hour and an half. Captain Mends then commanded the boats of the squadron, and cut out from under the forts one privateer of nine guns, one ship, three brigs, and one schooner. He continued serving in the West Indies till the year 1800, and on May 2nd was promoted to the rank of post-captain into the "Abergavenny." He was afterwards removed into the "Thunderer" and "Nereide," which latter ship he brought from the West Indies in 1803, and paid off, the war being over.

In 1805 Captain Mends was appointed to the command of a Sea Fencible District at Malahide in Ireland, where he remained till March, 1807, when he was removed to the Regulating Service at Liverpool. During the time he was employed on this unpleasant service, his great exertions in raising men for the fleet were noticed by the Board of Admiralty, when he was appointed to the command of His Majesty's ship "Arethusa," of forty-six guns, in August, 1808. On leaving Liverpool the mayor and corporation expressed to him in the most flattering terms the sense the merchants of the town entertained of his conduct since he had been amongst them, adding, that while they looked at the far greater number of men he had raised than any of his predecessors, they had the satisfaction of stating that not a single family had applied to them for relief in consequence of harsh imprisonment.

He was employed in the "Arethusa" for some time as senior officer of the blockading squadron off Cherbourg, and afterwards as senior officer with a squadron of frigates under his orders on the north coast of Spain, with a view of assisting the Spanish patriots and beating up the French posts along the coast. In 1809 he captured and destroyed the batteries of Santona, Boxneo, and Leguito, with other places on the Spanish coast. In the month of March he assisted "Amethyst" in the capture of the "Niemen," French frigate of forty-six guns, the "Arethusa" coming up at the close of the action. In this affair with the "Niemen" he was wounded in the forehead by a splinter caused by one of her shot, which in a small degree affected his eyesight, but which he seriously felt during the remainder of his life. Captain Mendis was the only man on board the "Arethusa" wounded on this occasion. In July, 1810, another expedition was fitted out under his orders at Coruña; the squadron, with 500 men from the Spanish army, destroyed the whole line of batteries from San Sebastian to San Andero, capturing nearly 100 pieces of cannon and many prisoners. For his services on these different occasions the Order of the Cross of Victory of Asturias and the rank of major-general in the Spanish army was conferred upon him, and he was recommended in the strongest manner to the consideration of His Majesty's Government by the Regency of Spain and by the captain-general of the Junta of Galicia. In 1811 he was appointed to the "Assistance" for the superintendence of the prison ships in Portsmouth harbour, which establishment was broken up in June, 1814, the war being over.

In 1815 Captain Mendis had the Grand Cross of the Order of Charles III. conferred upon him for his services on the coast of Spain, on which occasion he was presented to His Majesty George IV. by Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty, and received the order of knighthood. In 1816 he had a pension of £300 a year conferred upon him by order in council on account of his wounds. In June, 1821, he was appointed commodore and senior officer on the western coast of Africa, and the "Iphigenia" was commissioned at Plymouth to receive his broad pennant. In 1822 he was employed with the greatest success in the suppression of the slave trade, and returned to England in the fall of the year by the West Indies, when yellow fever broke out in the ship, the officers and crew suffering severely. In 1823 he commissioned the "Owen Glendower" at Chatham (for the same services). The slave trade being carried on principally during the absence of the commodore in the rainy season, he prevailed on the Admiralty to permit him to remain on the coast the whole period of his command, when he returned to it. It was in the successful prosecution of his orders for repressing this obnoxious traffic, and

in placing Cape Coast in a state of defence against the threatened attack of the Ashantees (which soon after took place), that on September 1st, 1823, he was first seized with cholera, and on the 2nd with apoplexy, which terminated his valuable life on the morning of the 4th, after a series of brilliant services extending over forty-four years. Sir Robert's eldest son, Robert Butler Mends, midshipman of the "Owen Glendower," died on December 5th at sea, off Sierra Leone, of a violent illness caught during the month of June, when employed in her boats on most arduous and fatiguing river service after slave vessels in the Bight of Biafra.

III.

A GOOD deal of the treasure and many other things were ultimately recovered from the wreck of the "Thetis," and the author has in his possession a crystal seal (on which are cut the initials of his grandfather) with a granite handle, the history of which may perhaps interest the reader.

The seal was once mounted in an old-fashioned gold setting, and was given to the writer's father by his grandfather, when "Thetis" met "Blanche" at Rio in 1828 (*vide ante*).

When the "Thetis" was lost, the seal, which was in his father's desk, went down in the ship. Operations for the recovery of the treasure, etc., were undertaken soon afterwards, and divers, under the command of Commander Dickinson, H.M.S. "Lightning," went to work at the wreck. It so happened that the master of the "Lightning," one Pope by name, had served under Captain William Bowen Mends, and had on one occasion received an acting warrant from him sealed with the seal in question.

Whilst working at the wreck, the man examining the buckets (as they came up from the divers, containing rubbish and bits of silver) thought he saw a piece of glass; he fished it out, wiped it, placed it on his hand, and, turning to the officer in charge, said, "There's some writing on it, sir." By an extraordinary coincidence that officer was Pope, who, thinking he recognized the seal—for such it was—put it in his pocket, took it on board his ship, made an impression from it, and found that it was the identical seal with which Captain W. B. Mends had sealed his acting appointment.

When the "Lightning" returned to England Pope restored the seal to Lieutenant Mends, who had it mounted—all mounting having of course gone—as it now is, the handle being cut from a piece of Plymouth Breakwater.

IV.

CAPTAIN the Hon. H. J. Rous, afterwards so celebrated for his long and honourable connection with the turf, remained a life-long friend of my father, as the following friendly little letter written towards the close of his life shows :—

“73, BERKELEY SQUARE.

“MY DEAR MENDS,—Just returned from the North, and received your letter. Happy to know you are in good health, with business enough to make life interesting. I am in pretty good repair, bordering upon eighty, with plenty of occupation in the racing world. My old prints are all gone, but I send you the last photograph—the correct appearance of all that remains of your old friend and shipmate,

“H. J. Rous.

“P.S.—I do not see your direction, and have therefore chosen Portsmouth. Send a line to say where I am to send the photo. I am off on a visit, and return here on Friday.”

V.

CAPTAIN CRUTTENDEN of the Indian Marine was associated with my father at the Admiralty for nearly twenty years. The acquaintance began at Aden in 1845. At that period it was the practice of the Government to pay a sort of blackmail to a friendly sheik between whom and some hostile chief a feud had arisen, and during the visit of the “Fox” the latter was endeavouring to surprise the garrison and take the place, his machinations resulting in a fight, in which he tried to get a strong force within our lines; but the garrison, duly warned, opened a destructive fire upon and repelled the hostile tribe with serious loss. This episode had to be dealt with by Lieutenant Cruttenden in his capacity of acting Political Resident. My father and Sir H. Blackwood happened to be spending a couple of days with him in his bungalow, and were present with him when the friendly sheik came to state his case. The masterly manner and calm dignity with which the young Resident dealt with this troublesome little affair impressed my father very much, and many years afterwards, in 1864, when he undertook the important duty of organizing and working the Indian troop service, and was asked whether he knew of any officer of the late Indian Navy whom he would care to have associated with him as a representative of the Indian Government in his office, he bethought him of his Aden acquaintance, and replied, “If that officer whose

name was Cruttenden were living, I should like him to work with." After the passage of a few letters, my father had thus the good fortune to secure the services of Captain Cruttenden.

This incident well illustrates the gift which my father possessed in a marked degree of forming a rapid and accurate judgment of the capabilities of others.

VI.

KINGLAKE gives the following graphic account of this incident in his *History of the Invasion of the Crimea*:—

"On November 30th Admiral Nachimoff, with six sail of the line, bore down upon the Turkish squadron still lying at anchor in the port of Sinope. There was no ship of the line in the Turkish squadron. It consisted of seven frigates and a sloop, a steamer, and some transports. The Turks were the first to fire, and to bring upon their little squadron of frigates the broadsides of six sail of the line, and, although they fought without hope, they were steadfast, either they refused to strike their colours, or else, if their colours went down, the Russian admiral was blind to their signal, and continued to slaughter them. Except the steamer every one of the Turkish vessels was destroyed. It was believed by men in authority that 4000 Turks were killed, that less than 400 survived, and that all these were wounded.

"The feeble batteries of the place suffered under the enemy's fire, and the town was much shattered. The Russian fleet did not move from Sinope until the following day.

"This onslaught upon Sinope and upon vessels lying in port was an attack upon Turkish territory, and was therefore an attack which the French and English ambassadors had been authorized to repel by calling into action the fleets of the Western Powers. Moreover, this attack had been impending for many days, and all this while the fleets of the Western Powers had been lying still in the Bosphorus within easy reach of the scene of the disaster. The honour of France was wounded, England was touched to the quick."

VII.

LETTER FROM GENERAL SIR G. BROWN.

"August 31st.

"MY DEAR MENDES,—I find we are likely to break down at our printing establishment, and that I shall be unable to perform my promise in respect to printing your instructions regarding the disembarkation. They assure me it would take them a week to print

off anything of such an extent, seeing that they have only one set of types, and would have to break them up several times.

"I have, however, endeavoured to impress upon them the importance of the work, and desire them to try what they can do.

"The details of boat duties' they have undertaken to do, but only in form and without inserting the ship's name or the duties the boats are to be expected to perform.

"This, I fear, will be a sad disappointment both to you and to Lord Raglan, who is exceedingly anxious it should have been done; but I repeat my doubts of its possibility within a reasonable time, and think it right to inform you, in order that your disappointment may be the less and that I may not be accused of having deceived you and the admiral.

"Yours, my dear Mends,

"Very faithfully,

"G. BROWN."

"P.S.—Pray tell the admiral that the adjutant-general is exceedingly anxious to have a boat on the south side of the bay at six o'clock to-morrow morning, for the purpose of conveying orders to the second commanding officer on board. We have the greatest difficulty at all times in communicating with the troops on board, and I should be very glad if some method could be devised, to obviate the difficulty if it could be managed without much inconvenience.

"G. B."

VIII.

As the fact of my father having been the first naval officer to enter Balaklava has been disputed, I quote from his journal of the day in question to show what the actual circumstances of the case are, though he himself never attached any importance to, nor laid stress upon it.

"*September 26th, off Balaklava.*—Arrived off this place this morning, and fired a few shots into the old Genoese tower at the entrance to the harbour, whence a desultory fire was being made on our advancing troops. Before anchoring, Sir Edmund sent me in, in the tug, to ascertain if Lord Raglan had arrived, what were his immediate wants and wishes, and if it were yet safe to send ships in? Found Lord Raglan just arrived; he was very cordial and glad to know of our presence. Sir Edmund landed when I got back. Ships have been going in to the funny little harbour all day. Have persuaded Sir Edmund that we can get in; he is now impressed with the importance of it, so I hope we shall do so to-morrow. The presence of flag will inspire confidence and order in the harbour."

IX.

EXTRACT FROM LOG OF H.M.S. "AGAMEMNON."

October 17th, 1854.

- Employed clearing decks of bulkheads and mess-traps, arms and all superfluous gear.
- a.m.
- 6.40. Observed batteries of the allied armies open fire on Sebastopol, which was returned from the Russian works. Hung stream and kedge anchors by the stern with hempen stream cable, and 10-inch hawser, ready for anchoring by the stern.
- 9.0. Down topgallant-masts and yards. Got studding-sail booms off the yards. Out boats. Sent the light boats and all spare topmasts and topsail-yards to "Vulcan." Captain and master on board "Britannia."
- 10.50. Weighed under steam. Joined Lieutenant Rolland from hospital. Preparing for action. Observed French and Turkish fleets weighing, with their respective steamers lashed alongside each ship. Admiral, captain, and master returned from "Britannia" and "London."
- 11.0. Admiral went on board "Albion."
- 11.30. Admiral returned.
- Noon. Cleared for action, and went on easy in the direction of p.m. Sebastopol, followed by "Sanspareil" and "London";
- 12.30. exchanged cheers with "Sanspareil" on passing her.
- 1.5. Observed forts open fire on French ships proceeding to engage the batteries on the south side of the harbour.
- 1.7. Signal made, "Proceed and engage batteries." Increased speed to 40 revolutions.
- 1.11. Observed two Russian steamers in the mouth of the harbour open fire.
- 1.12. French fleet opened fire on batteries, shot falling short. Increased speed to 50 revolutions. "Circassia" steaming ahead to sound, but lost lead-line. Proceeding for Fort Constantine.
- 1.30. Tried range with pivot gun on Wasp Fort; shot fell short.
- 1.32. Batteries opened fire on us; shot fell short.
- 1.35. "Sampson" and "Terrible" open fire on Wasp Fort. Slackened speed.

- 1.42. Opened fire on forts and cliff—returned by ditto—shot from both falling short. Went on as slow as possible. Firing at batteries as we passed down.
- 1.50. First shot struck the hull. Forts firing on us from various directions, hulling ship, and doing us much damage aloft.
- 1.55. Stopped engines.
- 2.0. Let go stream anchor by stern in $5\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms off Fort Constantine, veered to 50 fathoms, and let go small bower under foot in 5 fathoms. Opened fire with port broadside shot and shell on Fort Constantine. Set the screw on as slow as possible with helm hard aport, to bring the stream on starboard quarter, and ship's broadside to bear better. Bearing of anchorage: centre of Fort Constantine, S.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ S. 800 yards. Wasp Fort E. by N. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. — yards.
- 2.3. Observed a heavy explosion on Fort Constantine.
- 2.4. "Sanspareil" anchored in close order on our starboard quarter, and opened fire on batteries.
- 2.10. "London" anchored cable's length on "Sanspareil's" starboard quarter.
- 2.32. "Britannia" anchored. Observed ditto open fire; the rest of the fleet following, action became general.
- 2.35. Observed shot and shell falling very thickly on Fort Constantine.
- 3.0. Shoaled water to $4\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms under bows and $4\frac{3}{4}$ fathoms under stern.
- 3.20. Observed steamer towing "Albion" out of action.
- 4.0. Observed "Retribution's" mainmast gone by the board, and "Sanspareil" changing her position, having forged ahead so that her foremost guns would not bear clear of us. Keeping up a constant fire on Fort Constantine, and forts on cliff, much damage being done by the return fire to our hull, masts, yards and rigging. Observed "London" hauling out. Fire becoming very heavy on us. Shell burst in the bunt of the mainyard, firing the mainsail. Extinguished do. quickly.
- 4.10. Shell burst in ship's side (port), setting fire to do. Extinguished do.
- 4.30. Batteries eclipsed by heavy smoke; shot falling very thick. Signalized "Bellerophon" and "London" to take station astern of us. Admiral sent Mr. Coles (flag-lieutenant) to "Bellerophon" and "Sanspareil" with

orders to close in to support us; the latter ship was just changing her position; she re-anchored close to us. Signal No. 13, "General," "Close the enemy and engage for mutual support."

- 4.50. Observed "Rodney" coming in to our support.
- 5.0. "Rodney" anchored $\frac{1}{2}$ point on our starboard bow within a few yards; hauled astern on stream cable to keep clear of her.
- 5.5. "Rodney" paid off to starboard, fouling our headgear and pushing us on the shore.
- 5.10. Ceased firing—slipped S.B. cable at $12\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms. Cut away stream cable at 10 fathoms and backed astern, "Rodney" being aground, and having only $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet under the keel.
- 5.13. Went ahead easy.
- 5.25. Opened fire on batteries on cliff to the northward of Sebastopol.
- 5.26. Observed allied fleets proceeding to the northward. Ceased firing and proceeded at 30 revolutions out of range of batteries towards the anchorage off Katcha.
- 8.45. Came to off Katcha with B.B. in 14 fathoms—veered to 50 fathoms and banked up fires; fleets anchoring. 4 men killed and 25 wounded during the action. Committed to the deep the bodies of Robert Grey, William Poyson, I. Spicer, and John Smith—killed in action.

X.

COPY OF A DESPATCH FROM SIR EDMUND LYONS TO ADMIRAL DUNDAS.

" 'AGAMEMNON,' OFF THE RIVER KATSCHA.

" October 22nd, 1854.

"SIR,—In compliance with your desire to be made acquainted with deeds of remarkable gallantry that occurred in the attack on the batteries of Sebastopol on the 17th inst., I have great pleasure in bringing under your notice the brave conduct of my flag-lieutenant, Cowper Phipps Coles, as well as that of Mr. Edward C. Ball—acting second master of the steam tender 'Circassia.'

"2. Towards the end of the day, when the 'Agamemnon' and 'Sanspareil' were alone, and sorely pressed under the fire of Fort Constantine and three other batteries, and when the smoke alike

prevented your seeing their position, or any signals from me being distinguished, I was naturally anxious to call some ship to our support, but I was unwilling to expose a boat's crew to the rockets and other missiles of all descriptions that were ploughing up the water around us. At this critical moment Lieutenant Coles handsomely volunteered to take an order from me to Lord George Paulet, which his lordship was too happy to obey, and I have seldom had my mind more relieved than when I saw the 'Bellerophon' coming down to our succour, and my gallant flag-lieutenant and the boat's crew emerging from the smoke on their return; and I really believe he was the means of saving the 'Sanspareil,' for she, being *obliged* to anchor a little further out than the 'Agamemnon,' which had *first choice*, was sustaining a fire that made me tremble for my brave friend Captain Dacres, and his officers and ship's company, who were fighting the ship most admirably, and which, in fact, caused the death of many men in a few minutes.

"3. The gallantry of Mr. Ball appears to me to be also well worthy of being brought under your consideration. As the 'Agamemnon' was approaching the batteries, he volunteered to go ahead and sound.

"I felt the importance and value of his offer, but I thought it fairer to warn him that I thought it probable his vessel would be sunk, telling him, however, that I would have boats ready manned to pick up himself and crew. He did not hesitate an instant, but in accordance with my suggestion he at once placed his vessel on the off shore of the 'Agamemnon,' and, at a preconcerted signal, gallantly pushed ahead, and though he had the mortification of seeing the lead-line shot out of the leadsman's hands in the first attempt to get a cast, I saw him actively searching for another line, and persevering in doing so until it was evident the 'Agamemnon' could go no closer, and then only he steamed off, after his vessel had been struck in the hull by nine shot, providentially without having had a man hurt excepting the leadsman, George Pastell, a remarkable proof, as in the case of Lieutenant Coles, that fortune favours the brave.

"4. Late in the day I observed Mr. Ball, again a volunteer, assisting the 'Firebrand' in towing the 'Albion' out under a heavy fire.

"I am, etc.,

"EDMUND LYONS.

"VICE-ADMIRAL DUNDAS, C.B., *Commander-in-Chief.*"

XI.

I HAVE often heard my father discuss at length the much-vexed question of "ships *versus* forts," and, whilst he was in harmony with the general consensus of other authorities against the advisability of pitting wood and iron against granite and earth, he held that at all events some advantages were with the ship, viz., rapid mobility and a concentration of fire; and amongst his papers I find a memorandum of a conversation which he had had with General Sir William Reid, R.E., Governor of Malta, concerning the attack on the forts of Sebastopol.

General Reid held that if ships ever hoped to attack fortresses with a prospect of success, they should approach them as quickly and as closely as possible; but that to engage at long range might be fatal to the ships, and could do but little harm to the fortress.

Lord Exmouth at Algiers, Lord Nelson at Copenhagen, and Sir Robert Stopford at St. Jean d'Acre, may be cited in favour of the position taken up by Sir Edmund Lyons on this occasion, and it was my father's opinion that had he been properly supported by the commander-in-chief, there is no doubt that very great damage would have been done to the sea defences of Sebastopol; whilst it is worthy of note that the "Agamemnon," with a loss of only four men killed and twenty-five wounded, and ably supported by "Sanspareil" and "London," and a few other ships, sustained an action of nearly five hours with the guns of Fort Constantine, whose fire appears to have been materially subdued.

My father attributed this success to the close position taken up, and the concentration of the ship's fire on the enemy's embrasures.

XII.

THE following letter subsequently received by my father from Sir T. Maitland, who, the reader will remember, had been the previous captain of the "Agamemnon," throws an interesting light on the armament of the period:—

"PORTSMOUTH,

"November 16th, 1854.

"MY DEAR MENDES,—I beg to thank you for your kind and interesting letter of the 28th ult., and am much gratified to hear that my old friends, the officers and men of the 'Agamemnon,' have done their work to the satisfaction of the admiral and yourself; but I cannot take any credit for their training, as they were not so well up as they ought to have been when I left the ship,

but this was caused by the unfortunate visitation of scarlet fever, which completely put a stop to all training for four months. Your noble admiral appears to have placed his ship as near as possible to the forts, which is the only chance that ships have against well-constructed granite forts; I only wish you had been able to place her within 600 yards, and been provided with proper tools to do the work, for although the 'Agamemnon' is one of the heaviest-armed ships in the service, she has only *one gun* fit to breach a granite fort at 600 yards; I mean the 95-cwt. with solid shot and 16-pound charge.

"The hollow shot break against the granite, and it takes at least four 32-pound shot to do the work of one 68 with a 16-pound charge; in fact, from some trials we have just made it is found that iron plates, four and a half inches thick, will resist *all shot* except the 68-pounder fired with 16-pound charge, and they must be within 400 yards; at 900 yards the 68-pound shot did not destroy the plates. The effect on a wall faced with large blocks of granite would be much the same, nothing but the very heavy shot with large charges (at close quarters) can be depended upon.

"Whenever the Government again wish ships to attack batteries, the guns ought to be changed for that particular service. If half your guns had been taken out and replaced by an *equal weight* of 95-cwt. guns, the chances are you would have pounded down part of the fort. I speak from what I have seen. When I commanded the 'Wellesley' in China, we were five times engaged with granite forts and always within 600 yards, and fired from eight to ten thousand 32-pound and 8-inch hollow shot from the ships, but we never succeeded in breaching or bringing down the face of a battery; knocking down a few of the embrasures and breaking some of the stones was the extent of the injury, and the Chinamen generally gave us the last shot, and were only driven out by our landings.

"I mention these facts to show how little can be expected from ships against forts at long ranges. I believe the only ship that ever did destroy a fort was the 'Queen Charlotte' at Algiers, but she was within *fifty yards*, and the walls were *not* of granite; of course, all depends upon the construction of the walls you have to fire at.

"The 'Edinburgh,' with Admiral Chads, at Bomarsund succeeded in breaching the fort in a trial after it was taken, but from all I can hear it was not solidly built and the mortar not dry, having been lately finished.

"Our troops and seamen appear to have behaved nobly, but the loss is most serious and distressing; I only trust the reinforcements may arrive in time. Both the French and English

Governments are much to blame in not having sent them the moment it was decided to land in the Crimea, as it was not to be supposed the Russians would allow you to take Sebastopol without harder fighting, and the Turkish troops are not to be trusted without European officers to lead them.

"We have received the accounts of the action on the 5th, and of the death of three generals. Sir George Cathcart will be a most serious loss, as I believe he was considered by military men as one of the most promising young generals in the Army.

"If you see any of the officers who have had the working of Lancaster's guns, would you be so kind as to tell them I should like much to know how they have answered, before we put more of them into the gunboats. I daresay Captain Moorsom knows all about them.

"I hope young Long and Trollope are getting on well, they are both relations of mine. With best respects to your good admiral and best wishes for all my old shipmates,

"Yours very truly,

"T. MAITLAND.

"P.S.—I have just been told that Sir Edmund Lyons is to hoist his flag in the 'Royal Albert,' and of course you will go with him. If the admiral takes any of the mids with him I hope you will put in a good word for young Trollope and Long, that is, if their conduct has been such as to meet your approbation. T. M."

XIII.

EXTRACT FROM DAILY PAPER.

"WHEN Admiral Dundas left the fleet at Kamiash Bay a few days since a 'signal' mistake occurred, which has been talked of here so much, that in order to prevent your receiving inaccurate versions I forward it myself.

"Admiral Dundas, who had previously taken a cordial farewell of the French officers and the captains of the fleet, left Kamiash in the 'Fury'* steam frigate. As the frigate steamed out all the vessels of the combined fleets manned yards, waved hats, and cheered a farewell to the gallant admiral. While passing the 'Agamemnon,' the flagship of Sir Edmund Lyons, Admiral Dundas signalled, 'May success attend you,' and to this a reply of 'May happiness await you' was ordered to be hoisted. Unfortunately,

* This should be "Furious."

however wide the difference in real life, in the signal code hanging and happiness are very much alike; and in his haste to reply the signal officer hoisted the former instead of the latter. The mistake was rectified—though not before it had been read by the whole fleet—and the proper reply run up. The most ridiculous errors constantly take place in signalling, and the only thing which makes this blunder remarkable is that it should have occurred on board the flagship of Sir Edmund Lyons, and on such an occasion. However, like the signal which was forwarded the other day from Balaklava to Lord Raglan, stating that ‘twelve hungry Turks had come in,’ instead of ‘twelve hundred Turks landed,’ the whole thing has only been laughed at as one of those stupid errors which will occur occasionally. Apropos of the Turk, it is said ten thousand have landed at Eupatoria. *Cui bono?*

“Admiral Lyons, with several captains of the fleet, had a long interview with Lord Raglan at his headquarters yesterday.

XIV.

FROM LORD LYONS TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

“No. 105.

“‘ROYAL ALBERT,’ IN THE BOSPHORUS,
“*March 16th, 1857.*

“SIR,—As Captain Mends is proceeding to England to fill the post destined for him by their Lordships, I venture to indulge the desire I feel to place upon record in their Lordships’ archives the high sense I entertain of his valuable services as captain of my flagship throughout the late war.

“2. At Varna, in the equipment of the naval part of the Crimean expedition, he had a labouring oar in mastering difficulties occasioned by sickness and other disheartening circumstances.

“3. In the arrangements for embarking, conveying, and landing the expedition, he displayed a degree of genius and energy which materially contributed to encourage Lord Raglan to believe that obstacles which appeared to many men to be insurmountable might be overcome, and the end justified the belief.

“4. The gallantry, energy, and resource evinced by him as my flag-captain on board the ‘Agamemnon’ before the batteries of Sebastopol on October 17th, 1854, as well as in the expeditions to Kertch and Kinburn as captain of my flagship, the ‘Royal Albert,’ distinguished him as an officer peculiarly fitted for command in active warfare.

“5. I was not present when the alarming accident to the screw

of the 'Royal Albert' placed her in imminent peril, but I learn from eye-witnesses that his presence of mind, resource, and general bearing inspired zeal and confidence throughout the ship.

“6. I feel assured that in their Lordships' desire to form a just appreciation of the qualities of officers, I shall find an excuse for occupying their time with this letter.

“I am, Sir,

“Your most obedient, humble servant,

“LYONS,

“*Admiral and Commander-in-Chief.*”

XV.

“ADMIRALTY, S.W.,

“*March 27th, 1885.*

“SIR,—With reference to recent correspondence on the subject of the pontoons which you designed, and which are now attached to the Indian troopships, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to inform you that orders will be at once given for pontoons on this plan, to be officially recognized as, and called, the “Mends Artillery Rafts,” and I am to add that my Lords have much pleasure in giving this order.

“I am, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“EUAN MACGREGOR.

“ADMIRAL SIR W. R. MENDS, G.C.B.,

“*Anglesey, Alverstoke, Hants.*”

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